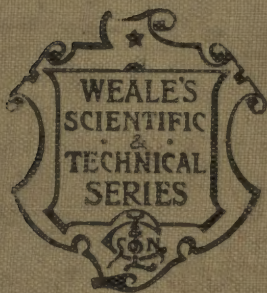


HALL-MARKING
OF JEWELLERY



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C

THE HALL-MARKING OF JEWELLERY

PRACTICALLY CONSIDERED

COMPRISING

AN ACCOUNT OF ALL THE DIFFERENT ASSAY TOWNS OF THE UNITED
KINGDOM, WITH THE STAMPS AT PRESENT EMPLOYED; ALSO
THE LAWS RELATING TO THE STANDARDS AND HALL MARKS
AT THE VARIOUS ASSAY OFFICES; AND A VARIETY
OF PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS CONCERNING THE
MIXING OF STANDARD ALLOYS AND
OTHER USEFUL INFORMATION

BY GEORGE E. GEE

GOLDSMITH AND SILVERSMITH

AUTHOR OF "THE GOLDSMITH'S HANDBOOK," "THE SILVERSMITH'S HANDBOOK," ETC.



LONDON
CROSBY LOCKWOOD AND CO.

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PREFACE.

THE present treatise on Hall Marks is issued with the special object of supplying to those interested in the subject—whether as dealers or workers in the precious metals—information of an essentially practical character, and which is much needed at the present time.

With this purpose in view, I have devoted myself for a long time to the collection of facts and reliable data, and in every case I may say that my long experience has greatly assisted me in these efforts to produce a work which I trust will prove both worthy of the subject itself, and satisfactory to the public generally.

But little explanation is needed in the way of description, or as to the aim of the work, as both are fully embodied in the Table of Contents—a glance at which will show that the subject has been dealt with, in every sense, from a thoroughly

practical point of view; and as I may claim to be one of the largest Hall-markers of silver chains in the United Kingdom, it will, no doubt, be allowed that I have had a large experience in regard to the matters here considered.

I trust further that the information thus put together will be found acceptable to that large section of the public for whom this handbook has been specially written.

G. E. GEE.

58, TENBY STREET NORTH, BIRMINGHAM.

May, 1882.

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THE HALL-MARKING OF JEWELLERY.

CHAPTER I.

Introductory.

BEFORE entering upon this subject, which is attracting the attention of the trade, the legislature, and the public, it may be of some interest to refer to the circular issued a short time ago by the wardens of the Goldsmiths' Company in London, and the guardians of the Birmingham Assay Office, to the manufacturers of gold and silver articles, calling their attention to the law upon the subject. The notice also contained a short reprint of clauses from several Acts of Parliament relating to the work of the above-named traders, prominent amongst them being the 12 Geo. II., cap. 26, sec. 5, and the 5 Geo. IV., cap. 52, sec. 20, which specially refer to the assaying and marking within the jurisdiction of the above offices.

The cause for this notice had arisen through several recent prosecutions by the Goldsmiths' Company against traders who had in some way or other infringed the laws and regulations of the company, as founded by Acts of Parliament—subsequently referred to—relative to gold and silver wares.

The Acts of Parliament which deal with this subject are so numerous and complicated, and extend through so lengthened a period of this country's history, that the proper manner of conducting his business becomes a difficult point with the ill-informed tradesman. For example, some of the old Acts have become obsolete through being superseded by others of modern date, and yet the former ones have not been repealed. The law as laid down in the circular above referred to is not perfect in precisely the same way, thus showing that the question is even too difficult a one to be mastered in its present form by the wardens themselves; and, further, there are, comparatively speaking, so very few articles of jewellery that come strictly under the compulsory orders of the company that the wardens' powers are shorn of a greater part of their authority.

As regards the public the present marks are too technical and various to be at all understood. Nine out of every twelve persons would not probably

be able to distinguish a German silver spoon plated with silver from a hall-marked one, on their own general knowledge of the marks, the same number of marks being upon each, and with a great similarity of design. The present marks, then, are too complicated to be of real service to the public, for whom they were intended. We do not believe there are many manufacturers even who could describe the whole of the marks on a piece of plate, with the purposes for which they are intended, right off, if incidentally asked the question, and we are quite sure that those who would be able to do so amongst our present jewellers would consist of a minority. Such evidence as this, which is quite within our own knowledge and experience, speaks volumes for the necessity of a revision, in a complete and thorough manner, of the present system of hall marks in their relation to articles of gold and silver plate and jewellery, and also as to their mode of application.

Referring to the circular already briefly alluded to, which contained the 20th section of chapter 52, 5th of George IV., it is further enacted, "That no goldsmith, jeweller, or gold-plate worker, nor any silversmith or silver-plate worker, nor any other person or persons whomsoever in the said town of Birmingham, or within thirty miles thereof, shall

knowingly put to sale, exchange, or sell any gold vessel or manufacture of gold, nor any silver plate, vessel, or manufacture of silver, made or wrought in the said town of Birmingham, or within thirty miles thereof, after the first day of July, 1824, or export the same out of this kingdom, until such time as such gold or silver plate, vessel, or manufacture of gold or silver shall be marked as follows (that is to say): every gold vessel, plate, or manufacture of gold, being of the standard of 22 carats of fine gold in every pound troy, with the mark or figure of the lion passant; and every gold vessel, plate, or manufacture of gold, being of the standard of 18 carats, with the mark of a crown and the figures 18; and all and every silver vessel, plate, or manufacture of silver, being of the standard of eleven ounces two pennyweights of fine silver per pound troy, with the lion passant, and all and every silver plate or manufacture of silver, being of the standard of eleven ounces ten pennyweights of fine silver per pound troy, with the figure of *Britannia* ;"—then here follow the details of the other marks, which are the

Maker's Mark.

Town or Company's Mark.

Date Mark.

Penalties and forfeits, &c., &c.

It will thus be observed that the information given

in the circular is imperfect, so far as it regards the various distinctive marks to be put upon the different qualities of gold and silver work manufactured at the present time, and also as to the quality and kind of work in which compulsory powers are vested; the mark—*lion passant*—being given the same both for 22-carat gold and silver, but in practice it is really not so, that part of the act having now grown obsolete, and another taking its place, because there was nothing at that time to prevent silver of the lowest standard, and already marked for the purpose, from being gilt and sold for 22-carat gold, if dishonest persons chose to avail themselves of this shortcoming of the then Act relating to the marking of gold and silver. In the year 1844 the mark for 22-carat gold was changed from the *lion passant* to a *crown* and the figures 22, but nothing whatever is said of this in the circular now before us. So that persons relying on this Act of Parliament with regard to the authorised marks for 22-carat gold, would probably look upon the present test mark as to quality with some little doubt or incredulity, especially when no *lion passant* was to be found upon the article under inspection.

With the view of making these marks more intelligible to the trade and the public, by whom they are but little understood, we purpose giving a short

but practical exposition of the history of the whole system of hall-marking, together with all the principal details of the marks themselves, so as to form, as it were, a complete and reliable *trade guide* for gold and silver workers in all branches of the trade *at home and abroad*; and we trust that the information which will be found in connection with this subject will be of daily use, and afford a ready means of identifying the various English hall marks.

The only qualities or standards of gold upon which the hall marks appear are as follows:—

Gold Standards.

22 carats or	$\frac{22}{24}$	$=$	$\frac{11}{12}$	$=$	$\frac{916\frac{2}{3}}{1000}$	$=$	·917
20 ,,	$\frac{20}{24}$	$=$	$\frac{5}{6}$	$=$	$\frac{833\frac{1}{3}}{1000}$	$=$	·834
18 ,,	$\frac{18}{24}$	$=$	$\frac{3}{4}$	$=$	$\frac{750}{1000}$	$=$	·750
15 ,,	$\frac{15}{24}$	$=$	$\frac{5}{8}$	$=$	$\frac{625}{1000}$	$=$	·625
12 ,,	$\frac{12}{24}$	$=$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$=$	$\frac{500}{1000}$	$=$	·5
9 ,,	$\frac{9}{24}$	$=$	$\frac{3}{8}$	$=$	$\frac{375}{1000}$	$=$	·375

The 20-carat standard is not marked in England or Scotland, being legal only at the Dublin Assay Office; it is, therefore, an exclusively Irish standard.

The fractional and decimal parts into which the standards are here divided represent as many

parts of the pennyweight, ounce, pound, or decimal parts of 1,000.

There are in the United Kingdom six legal standards for gold and two for silver. The following are the

Silver Standards.

$$11 \text{ oz. } 10 \text{ dwts. or } \frac{230}{240} = \cdot 959$$

$$11 \text{ oz. } 2 \text{ dwts. or } \frac{222}{240} = \cdot 925$$

The lower standard is the oldest-established one, and the one in more constant demand at the present time for articles of plate, &c., although the higher quality is sometimes in request, which is then marked according to that standard, in compliance with the will of the intending purchaser.

At the present time there are assay offices in nine towns of the United Kingdom, although formerly there used to be twelve, viz. :—

Assay Towns.

London,	Incorporated	1327, 1 Edward III.
Chester	„	1700, 12 William III., c. 4.
York	„	1700 „
Exeter	„	1700 „
Bristol	„	1700 „
Norwich	„	1700 „
Newcastle-upon-Tyne		1702, 1 Anne, c. 9.
Birmingham	„	1773, 13 George III., c. 52.
Sheffield	„	1773 „
Edinburgh	„	1687, James VII.
Glasgow	„	1819, 59 George III.
Dublin	„	1638, Charles I.

These towns were empowered to mark articles of gold and silver, according to the provisions of the above-named Acts of Parliament, in verification of their quality. In some of the places mentioned the marking of jewellery and plate was conducted and controlled by the "Guild" or associated Company of Goldsmiths, previous to the dates of incorporation by "Charter" enumerated above; however, these were the principal acts which finally established the privileges and defined the duties of Goldsmiths' Hall, and which now, in conjunction with subsequent acts, regulate the right of working the various assay offices throughout the kingdom, and also the powers accorded to them. Some of the towns mentioned above are not now exercising the privileges with which they are empowered. Neither have all the offices been vested with equal authority to assay and mark all the standards.

Exeter marks only wedding-rings of 22 carats, and the old standard silver of 925 thousandths. This hall stamps no 18-carat gold, or gold of the three lower standards, and no watch-cases of any description.

Sheffield marks no gold of any quality, and only silver of the old and new standard, that is, of the fineness of 959 and 925 thousandths respectively.

The assay offices at York, Bristol, and Norwich

have been discontinued. At the Dublin Assay Office no new standard silver of 959 thousandths is marked; but the additional power of marking 20-carat gold is vested with this office to the exclusion of all the others.

The powers at the six remaining offices, viz.; London, Birmingham, Chester, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Edinburgh, and Glasgow, are all equal, each having the right to assay and mark all the legal standards—both gold and silver.

Having enumerated the towns which have the power to assay gold and silver, we will now attempt to explain the nature and purposes for which the hall marks are employed.

The marks which are to be found impressed upon *duty-paying* gold articles are six in number, and may be classified and described as follows:—

Hall Marks on Gold Articles.

1. Maker's Mark.
2. Quality Mark.
3. Standard Mark.
4. Hall Mark.
5. Date Mark.
6. Duty Mark.

The articles upon which these marks appear will have passed through the hall of one of the assay towns already named, possessing full powers for marking; and will be of the quality of either 22-

carat or 18-carat, just as the figures 22 or 18 are found stamped upon them, and which will show that the *duty* has been paid on the manufacture.

The standard mark is not the same for England, Scotland, and Ireland; and the hall mark proper is different at every assay town at which articles are stamped, every assay office having its own *municipal* or *private* mark; but all the other marks are similar in design and arrangement.

Hall Marks on Silver Articles.

1. Maker's Mark.
2. Standard Mark.
3. Hall Mark.
4. Date Mark.
5. Duty Mark.

It will thus be seen that there are only five marks on duty-paying silver articles, as against six on gold, the quality mark being omitted from silver.

Hall-marked gold articles not paying duty have only five marks stamped upon them, and silver four.

The commonly recognised standard mark is omitted on all qualities of gold below 18-carats at all the offices. Lower qualities to those named in silver are not in any way hall marked.

CHAPTER II.

Description of the various Hall Marks.

WE will now describe the nature of the various marks, and the purposes for which they are designed. And in doing so it will be best to take them in their regular order as they generally appear on a wedding-ring, a piece of plate, or other hall-marked gold article; we shall therefore first refer to

The Maker's Mark,

which should, strictly speaking, represent the name of the maker of the article in question; but this mark is not always a sure guarantee, as merchants and wholesale dealers, in some instances register their own names at the assay office of the nearest municipal town, and then request the *real maker* to stamp such goods as are ordered by them with their—the merchant's or wholesale dealer's—punch to represent the work as of their own manufacture.

The maker's mark is now the first letter of his Christian and surname, a form established in the year 1739, 12 Geo. II., c. 26, and this practice has continued without alteration to the present day. This was not the first mark that goldsmiths were ordered to put upon their wares, for as far back as the year 1336, by an ordinance of the Goldsmiths' Company, all gold work was to be brought to the hall to be assayed, and such as would bear the *touch* should be marked "with the owner's and assayer's marks," and afterwards with the private mark of Goldsmiths' Hall. In the year 1363 was enacted by Act of Parliament, 37 Edward III., c. 7, "that every master goldsmith should have *a mark by himself*, the said mark to be known by those appointed by the King to survey and assay the work; but the said goldsmith's mark was not to be put on the work until the surveyors had made their assay and marked it with the King's mark, after which the goldsmiths were allowed to affix their own private mark."

Formerly the mark of the goldsmith was some emblem or design, such as a bell, a star, a rose, a crown, a shield, or a hawk's jess, but in the earliest times without the maker's initials, the goldsmiths being then free to choose any mark which their fancy dictated. Probably at this early date, in some

instances the maker's initials may have been adopted as the goldsmith's mark; but whatever were the distinctive marks, as we learn from the above statute, all were to be individually known to the King's surveyor. It was not until the seventeenth century that the goldsmiths were bound by law to use their initials as the private mark of identification.

In 1379, 2 Richard II., it was ordained that every master goldsmith should have *his own proper mark upon his work*. In 1423, 2 Henry VI. c. 14, it was further enacted "that no worker of gold or silver within the city of London should sell within the city, until the work had been assayed and marked, and also *with a mark or sign of the workman of the same*, upon forfeiture of double the value of the work or goods offered for sale; and that the mark or sign of every goldsmith be known to the wardens of the Goldsmiths' Company at Goldsmiths' Hall." In 1477, 17 Edward IV., a statute was made which, after reciting the above Act of Henry VI., goes on to say, "that no work of silver should be exposed for sale within the City of London, or two miles of the same, until it had been marked with the touch of Goldsmiths' Hall, and also with the *mark of the worker* of the same." This Act continued to be the law for seven years.

The same provisions were continued by various subsequent statutes, and by the ordinances of Goldsmiths' Hall in London, where it was ordered that a set of tables made in alternate columns of lead and vellum should be exhibited. On the leaden columns were struck the maker's marks with his private punch, and on the corresponding columns in vellum were entered and written the maker's names according to the provisions of the statute 2 Henry VI., c. 14, "that the mark or sign of every goldsmith be known to the wardens of the craft." In 1675 the wardens of the Goldsmiths' Company ordered "that all gold and silver workers shall bring their respective marks, or cause them to be brought to Goldsmiths' Hall, and there strike the same on a table kept in the assay office, and likewise enter their names and places of habitation in a book there kept for that purpose, whereby the persons and their marks might be known unto the wardens of the said company; and that no person or persons do from henceforth put to sale any of the wares of either gold or silver, small or great, before the *workman's mark* be struck clear and visible thereon, and upon every part thereof that is wrought asunder and afterwards soldered or made fast thereto, in finishing the same, unless it be such sort of work adjudged by the

wardens that it will not conveniently bear the worker's mark."

It will be observed that up to this date there was nothing definitely leading to the identification of the maker's mark by the general public, the private mark of the maker of an article being then known only to himself and to Goldsmiths' Hall, or at most to a few fellow-members of the gold and silver trade, who probably acquired that knowledge through marking at the same hall. This state of the existing law, as laid down in the previous statutes and ordinances of Goldsmiths' Hall, soon proved unsatisfactory from a commercial point of view, and required amendment. With the increased and rising intelligence of the people, something more easy of recognition was demanded, as well as a better proof in support of the particular mark assigned to each maker than had hitherto existed; because as masters and workmen multiplied, deceit and fraud arose, and what had before been very easy of distinction now became complicated and difficult, there not being sufficient variation in the different and peculiar marks, as makers increased, to warrant their existence as definite and reliable evidence concerning the real makers of the work.

By an Act passed in the year 1697, twenty-two years later than the Goldsmiths' Order, 8 and 6

William III., c. 8, section 9, the mark of the goldsmith was more legally defined and rendered far more intelligible to the trade as makers of gold and silver articles, and also to the public generally, who were much better able to decipher it, and who could thus form a true opinion as to who was the maker of the various goods submitted to them for sale or inspection. By the above-named Acts the marks of the goldsmiths in future were to be known by the first two letters of their surname, and this practice continued to be the law down to the year 1739, when another important change was ordered to take place, viz., that in practice at the present time, the particulars of which are recorded in the following paragraph. The Acts 8 and 9 William III. were repealed in 1720, consequent upon a change of *standard*, when the marks of the manufacturing goldsmiths, as expressed by the first two letters of their surname, seem to have become irregular, and were partially discontinued after the repeal of those Acts.

In 1739, by 12 George II., c. 26, it was made compulsory that makers were to destroy their existing marks, which were those above named, and substitute for them the initial letters of their *Christian and surname*. These are now the makers' private marks as finally established by the Act of Parlia-

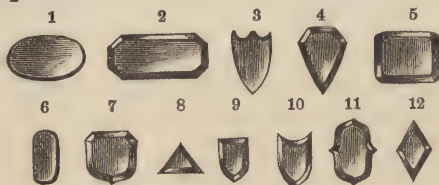
ment of the date here alluded to, and this provision has remained in force ever since, without alteration or restriction during the whole of the period. It is to be observed that this new order contained some really definite instructions to goldsmiths and all concerned in the trade, enabling them the more readily to distinguish between their own work and that of others, and to take the best and most expeditious course for procuring redress in cases of fraud, or deception of any kind.

The maker's mark—the first letters of his Christian and surname—which are now stamped upon hall-marked articles of plate or jewellery, having been somewhat cursorily explained, it may be necessary, and will be much more convenient to our readers, in giving a descriptive or formal account of the various makers' marks, past and present, to illustrate the shape of the escutcheons or punches which have been used by them for the purpose of distinguishing their wares or manufactures.

In large manufactories sometimes a small extra mark is put upon the work; viz. that of the workman by whose hands the article was made. It is used as a means of tracing the article to the actual maker in the workshops, and who has to finish it after it has been to the hall to be marked. In large workshops, where the work is similar in character

and design, this rule is almost indispensable, but in smaller ones it is not required.

The following illustration represents some of the various shapes of makers' punches such as are now adopted :—



The formality which a beginner of hall-marked work has to go through may be conveniently described as follows :—The first duty is to get a punch made by a good letter-cutter of the form of any one of the above illustrations—(Fig. 2 represents our own shape)—with the initial letters of his name upon it, before referred to ; then to take it to the assay office of the nearest municipal town, and there register your name as a maker of gold, or gold and silver goods, when you will be asked to sign the name-register book, giving your place of manufacture and also that of your residence, as a guarantee of respectability and good faith.

The mark of your punch having been affixed, the next step will be to procure some office forms, without which the work will not be received. The forms cost about one shilling per dozen. At this stage

the maker is at liberty to have goods hall-marked, provided that he has complied with the office rules and regulations of the hall where he marks, which can readily be obtained there, and that he has marked his work with the punch containing his initials, as indicating it to be his own manufacture. For, as we have already pointed out, the maker's is the first mark now impressed upon plate or jewellery, and it is always stamped upon it before leaving the manufactory where it is made, for the hall. It will be gathered from these remarks that the stamp of the maker is employed as a facility in tracing the work to the hands of the actual maker of it. It is, therefore, the recognised *guarantee of the manufacturer* as evidence of his work. If a small mark, such as a cross or a star, be observed upon the work near the maker's mark, it is that of the workman who executed it, which, when necessary, is allowable by law, but to the public this mark has no real meaning, and it is very seldom that work is to be seen struck with it.

Next in the order in which the marks appear comes:—

The Quality Mark.

This mark is now always denoted by figures on gold, as representing the fineness of the gold in

carats of that quality, and is the same for all the various kinds of gold articles at every assay office at present existing in the United Kingdom, thus :—

22 for gold of 22 carats.

18	„	18	„
15	„	15	„
12	„	12	„
9	„	9	„

The three lower or inferior qualities are also stamped with their decimal indicators as a further proof of the genuineness of the assay, not to the exclusion of, but concurrent with, the carat marks. The number of carats and the decimal parts are stamped with separate punches, and the figures in decimals appear *only* on the three qualities enumerated in the annexed table, as follows :—

15·625 for gold of 15 carats.

12·5	„	12	„
9·375	„	9	„

The two higher or superior standards of gold do not have their decimal fineness expressed by a stamp mark in figures, but have another peculiar and distinctive symbol indicative of the standard to which they belong. The necessary information relating to the identification of this mark will be found under the heading *Standard Mark*.

In the United Kingdom the fineness of gold is commonly expressed in carats. The carat is an Abyssinian weight; it resembles a bean, and is the fruit of a tree called *the kuara*. It varies very little from the time of its being gathered, and seems to have been used as a standard weight for gold in Africa from the earliest times. A carat is the twenty-fourth part of any weight, be it ounce, pennyweight, pound, &c.; but at Venice they have a real weight called a carat, whence we derive the name. Their carat, however, does not correspond with ours, one hundred and fifty Venetian carats making an ounce troy; it is therefore a settled and permanent weight, while the English carat is as follows, in proportion to the annexed standard weight troy:—

Carat of Gold.

	dwt. grs.
A carat of a pound is	10 0
A carat grain of a pound is	2 12
A carat quarter-grain of a pound is	0 15
A carat of an ounce is	0 20
A carat grain of an ounce is	0 5
A carat quarter-grain of an ounce is	0 1 $\frac{1}{4}$

There are therefore only 24 English carats to the ounce troy. Amongst jewellers the carat weight is never made use of, the term being employed in denoting and expressing the *purity* of gold only. It is not an absolute, fixed, or real weight, although

as a weight for diamonds it is so, and is employed in India as well as in Europe by diamond-dealers in the course of their business. The weight of it is four grains. For purposes of weighing gold, the *grain* is the standard weight established by legal authority. It originated from the weight of a grain of wheat taken from the centre of the ear when in a dry state, and it constitutes the unit of all weights in this country. The fineness of the various alloys of gold is expressed in carats, and as many 24th parts as there are found in a piece of work by assay of pure gold, it is gold of that number of carats ; thus gold of 22 or 18 parts of pure metal, is gold of 22 or 18 carats respectively. Of course the piece of gold work under assay must, at the commencement of the operation, be divided into 24 equal parts to arrive at these results.

All gold and silver computations are made by troy weight, and it is from the imperial standard pound, made in the year 1758, that all the other weights are obtained ; the ounce being $\frac{1}{12}$ th of the pound, the pennyweight $\frac{1}{20}$ th of the ounce, and the grain $\frac{1}{24}$ th of the pennyweight. Diamonds and pearls are an exception to this rule ; they are weighed by the carat of four grains, to which allusion has already been made, but 5-carat, or diamond grains, are only equal to about 4 grains troy. The imperial

ounce troy contains 150 diamond carats, the same as the Venetian weight. The old English pound, or Tower weight, was rather lighter than the present pound troy; it contained $11\frac{1}{4}$ ounces, and was the recognised weight at the Mint. It continued in use from the Norman Conquest till the reign of Henry VIII., 1527, when the troy weight was introduced. Subsequent Acts have been passed for establishing uniformity of weights, notably the one of 1758, and another of later date, 5 Geo. IV., c. 74, which came into operation on the 1st of January, 1826.

The quality of silver is not expressed in carats to distinguish the different standards, as in the case of gold. The old standard of 11 oz. 2 dwts. of fine silver to the pound is called *sterling silver*, and is generally synonymous with the term *standard*. Sterling, according to one account, "is supposed to be a name derived from some Netherlanders who were called *Afterlings*, and who were employed in this country in coining." (See Harris's "Essay on Money and Coins.") According to another account, "it came from the Germans, who were termed *Easterlings* by the English, from their living eastward; and who were first called in by King John to reduce the silver to its due fineness; and such money in ancient works is always called *Easterlings*."

The higher silver standard is called *new sterling*, though sometimes it is termed *Britannia silver*; and although it is not now in general use, it still exists as a distinct standard, and if articles of plate made of that quality by the wish of the purchaser are sent to Goldsmiths' Hall, they would receive the various marks according to the fineness of the silver. It is an optional standard to be employed if desirable, and was compulsory only for a short period, viz. from March 25th, 1697, to June 1st, 1720.

Its use has now become almost obsolete, as articles manufactured from it were found to be far too soft for general purposes, and this necessitated a return to the former quality; however, from the last-named date it has continued without alteration to be the lawful fineness for the silver currency, as well as for the manufacture of silver plate, and for all silver articles compulsorily required to be hall marked.

By an Act passed in the year 1878, 41 and 42 Victoria, ch. 49, s. 20, the standard pound troy and its ounce were further legalised, but the divisions of the ounce were altered, and a set of legal weights established, in which the ounce troy is divided decimally, that is to say, into *tenths*, *hundredths*, and *thousandths*. All gold, silver, and precious stones, &c., must, according to the provisions of

this Act, be sold by the ounce troy, or by any decimal parts of such ounce, to be deemed valid, and every person who acts in contravention of this enactment is liable to a fine not exceeding *five pounds*. All previous acts which had legalised the pennyweight and grain were now by this Act repealed. It is termed, "The Weights and Measures Act, 1878," and is now in force throughout the United Kingdom.

In concluding our remarks concerning the peculiar and separate marks allotted to the British authorised standards of quality, we may observe that, with regard to the fineness of the gold, they represent a certain and uniform method, as the annexed tables will show:—

Fine Gold, per lb. Troy.

	oz.	dwt.	
22 carat contains	11	0	per lb.
20 "	10	0	"
18 "	9	0	"
15 "	7	10	"
12 "	6	0	"
9 "	4	10	"

Fine Gold, per oz. Troy.

	dwt.	grs.	
22 carat contains	18	8	per oz.
20 "	16	16	"
18 "	15	0	"
15 "	12	12	"
12 "	10	0	"
9 "	7	12	"

Percentage and Decimal Table.

22 carat contains 11-12th or '916,66 Fine.

20 ,, 10-12th or '833,33 ,,

18 ,, 9-12th or '750 ,,

15 ,, 5-8th or '625 ,,

12 ,, 4-8th or '500 ,,

9 ,, 3-8th or '375 ,,

There is not, however, an absolute uniformity of the several standards when viewed in the separate light of these tables. According to the first, or pound table, the three higher qualities appear the most uniform, consisting of 9, 10, and 11 ounces respectively, of fine gold in the pound troy. The three lower standards of the same table follow in equal ratio, containing $4\frac{1}{2}$, 6, and $7\frac{1}{2}$ ounces per pound of fine gold. According to the second, or ounce table, the four lower qualities are the most uniform in their proportionate degree of fineness. This regularity of the same standards is also observable in the last or decimal table. So is it, again, with the three superior ones, and also the three inferior ones, according to the fractional or percentage system of calculation.

We trust that sufficient details have now been given respecting the standard qualities, and also of the stamp-marks which indicate the various qualities, to render them easy of comprehension by all interested in the subject. We shall therefore pass on, and next refer to—

The Standard Mark.

Standard gold and standard silver represent certain fixed proportions of those metals, as directed by law, combined with less valuable ones. Those proportions have varied at different periods with regard to gold, but the silver standard—925 thousandths of a lb.—with the exception of the interval from March 25, 1697, to June 1, 1720—has always been that prescribed by law. The terms *fine gold* and *fine silver*, as commonly used, are expressive of the state of those metals when in a perfectly pure state, that is, absolutely free from alloy of every kind, as alloy signifies admixture of inferior metal. Silver itself is an alloy to gold. Gold and silver in their pure state would be far too soft to be employed in the manufacture of plate or other articles of commercial use; hence the necessity of adding an alloy to give an increased hardness and toughness, thereby rendering the articles made from gold and silver in conjunction with alloys, much more durable and serviceable to the purchaser. But in order to prevent the admixture of too much inferior metal, and as a safeguard to the public, it was deemed advisable as far back as the reign of Edward I., A.D. 1300, to prescribe certain regulations for the proper guidance of the

trade, as well as to prevent those frauds which appear to have been practised by some of the earlier goldsmiths.

The system of assay just referred to, instituted in England in the year 1300, 28 Edward I., c. 20, and commonly called *Articuli super cartas*, conferred the right of assaying the precious metals when made into plate or other articles, to the Goldsmiths' Company of London. At this date the goldsmiths of London were not incorporated by charter but were a *Guild*. This statute was the first attempt at introducing a standard for gold; it is described as the *touch of Paris*; it ordains "that no goldsmith of England or elsewhere within the King's dominions shall from thenceforth make, or cause to be made, any manner of vessel, jewel, or any other thing of gold or silver, except it be of the true alloy, that is to say, gold of a certain touch and silver of a certain alloy, or better, at the pleasure of him to whom the work belongeth; and that none work worse silver than money, and that no manner of vessel of silver depart out of the hand of the workers until it be assayed by the hands of the craft and marked with the *Leopard's Head*, and that they work no worse gold than the *touch of Paris*; and that all the good towns of England where any goldsmiths be dwelling shall be ordained

according to this statute as they of London be." The "touch of Paris" referred to in this statute was *fine gold*, or 24 carats. The first English standard, therefore, was pure gold, and the first standard mark was a leopard's head for both gold and silver.

A question has often been raised as to whether gold had an assay or standard mark at this early date. This doubt, we think, can be set at rest by the first charter to the Goldsmiths' Company, bearing date 30th March, 1327, 1 Edward III., which ordereth, "that in all cities and towns in England where goldsmiths reside, one or more of every such city or town, for the rest of that trade, shall come to London to be ascertained of their touch, and there to have a stamp of a puncheon of a leopard's head marked upon their work, as of ancient time it has been ordained." Another conjecture can be explained by reference to this charter, viz. as to the number of the towns where goldsmiths resided having the right to assay and mark their own work at the early date just referred to. We find that this privilege was conferred upon the Goldsmiths' Company in London only, who were intended to do the whole of the assaying and marking. In support of this, we quote from an ordinance of the company made in the year 1336,

to the effect "that none do work gold unless it be as good as the assay of the mystery—the Goldsmiths' Company—or in silver, unless as good or better than the King's coin, or sterling, which has always been 11 ozs. 2 dwts. to the lb., and that when done it shall be brought to the Hall to be assayed, and that such as will bear the *touch* shall be marked with the maker's and assayer's marks, and afterwards touched with the *Liberdshede crowned*." We have here ample proof of the absolute right of Goldsmiths' Hall to assay and mark all goldsmiths' work throughout the realm; the same fineness of the standard of 24 carats being still maintained by them, with the leopard's head, however, *crowned*, as a standard mark instead of the simple leopard's head as heretofore.

But the Goldsmiths' Company do not appear to have exerted themselves to the full extent of their powers. As will be seen by the following statute, they had become lax as regards their duties and privileges. The master goldsmiths had been allowed to become their own assayers, and this often led to the manufacture of wares below the fineness they should be. To remedy this, an Act of Parliament was passed in the year 1423, 2 Henry VI., c. 14, which ordered divers touches for York, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Lincoln, Norwich, Salisbury, and Coventry,

but the existing laws upon the subject were in no way altered. It may be supposed that Goldsmiths' Hall had jurisdiction in London only after the above Act became law. A subsequent charter, however, confirmed all their former privileges, and gave them further power "to search, inspect, and regulate the sale of all gold and silver wrought in the kingdom of England, with power to *reform all defects* in the working, and to punish those persons who offended against the law." Power was also given to Goldsmiths' Hall to make by-laws where necessary for the better government of the assay offices, and this authority (2 Edward IV., 1462) applied to all the towns to which touches had been given by the previous statute.

Until the year 1477, wrought gold was to be of the legal standard of 24 carats, or touch of Paris; all gold wares were then required to be of the fineness of 18 carats, 17 Edward IV., c. 1, 1477. This statute, after reciting the Act of 2 Henry VI. above quoted, which ordained "that goldsmiths' work of silver should be as fine as sterling, and that it should be marked with the touch of the leopard's head," states that as that Act had been daily broken by goldsmiths and other workers of silver, the fineness of the gold wares was to be fixed at 18 carats, and the silver at

the same as sterling, on pain of forfeiture of the double value; and it further enacts that no work of silver should be exposed for sale within the City of London, or two miles of it, until it had been marked with the touch of the *leopard's head crowned*.

Previous to the fixing of the gold standard at 18 carats by the Act 17 Edward IV., c. 1, 1477, numerous small wares of goldsmiths' work were frequently wrought and sold below the former legal standard of fine gold, or touch of Paris. After the passing of this Act of Parliament, all future gold wares were required to be not less in fineness than 18 carats, and were not to be exposed in London and two miles round, unless marked with the standard mark of the leopard's head crowned, in proof of the requisite fineness.

Although the Goldsmiths' Company of London had the right of inspection and trial for upholding the proper standards of gold and silver wrought into commercial wares, we find that they very seldom exercised it out of London; for it was afterwards found that persons in different parts of the kingdom did make and expose for sale gold and silver articles below the authorised standard of the realm. At the time to which we are referring it is probable that the country assay offices, or at least most of them, had been discontinued, and that the

goldsmiths had again become their own assayers, for according to another ordinance of the Goldsmiths' Company of the year 1504, granted by Parliamentary Charter 20 Henry VII., we find "that divers persons in divers parts of this kingdom do work and expose to sale gold and silver wrought worse than standard, and neither fear nor doubt to be punished, as due search, or due punishment, is seldom executed out of London. And that the common standard, or assay of gold and silver, is kept in Goldsmiths' Hall in London, and that all work in gold and silver there tried and assayed and affirmed for good, shall be stamped with their marks, which they use for that purpose, and all defective work utterly condemned."

During the next half-century, in consequence of the coinage having become much debased, goldsmiths' work had also deteriorated; so much so, that by the statute 15 Elizabeth, 1573, commissioners were appointed to inquire into the standard of gold and silver, in order, if possible, to arrest its debasing tendency, and to bring it back to its former state of purity. The master and wardens of the Goldsmiths' Company were summoned before the commissioners to ascertain how far they had complied with the authorised standard of fineness.

It was acknowledged that they had not been so vigilant as they might have been in their efforts to uphold the proper standard, and they were now called upon to give security to the Sovereign that in future no gold wares should pass their Hall unless of the fineness of 22 carats for gold, and 11 ozs. 2 dwts. in the pound for silver. The establishment of the gold standard of 22 carats was not confirmed by an Act of Parliament until three years later, being at this time only a promise by the Goldsmiths' Company not to mark wares less as regards fineness than 22 carats; because it was said that the people were daily bringing things wrought by the goldsmiths of a lower standard than they ought to be, and that the touch of the *leopard's head* was often put on those things by the keeper of the touch of London and other places, as if the things were as fine as they should be, whereas they were defective and not to be relied upon with regard to the quality of standard.

In the year 1576, 18 Elizabeth, c. 15, Parliament took up the question, and finally established the gold standard at 22 carats, and the silver standard at 11 ozs. 2 dwts. to the pound troy. This was the first statute which specifically stated what the standard for the manufacture of silver plate

should be; the silver which was used for the coinage had hitherto been the guide for silver workers from the time of the Norman Conquest, and it was always made of this standard. The mark to be impressed in token of the requisite fineness was the *leopard's head*, which was confirmed by Parliament, 1423, 2 Henry VI., c. 14, and afterwards altered to the leopard's head *crowned* for London and two miles distance therefrom (17 Edward IV., c. 1). We have not been able to trace with absolute certainty the mark for gold at this period, but it is highly probable that it was the same as for silver at the commencement of the system of hall-marking, and for some time afterwards, as we read of no other special mark being introduced by statute up to the time to which we are referring. But as the Act 17 Edward IV. made provisions that all gold and silver wares should bear the assay mark, we think it can be safely taken for granted that both metals bore the same standard mark at the period alluded to.

The next change of the standard mark appears to be mentioned in the records of the Goldsmiths' Company of the year 1597, and is spoken of as *Her Majesty's Lion*. This is the first notice we can find of the mark of the lion, but it must doubtless have been used long before, for it has been found

on plate of the year 1545. It was one of the then private marks of Goldsmiths' Hall, and no one else had a right to impress it upon plate, or gold and silver wares of any description whatever. In a Goldsmiths' order of February 23rd, 1675, it is particularly referred to, which enacts that all manner of silver wares were to be assayed at Goldsmiths' Hall and there approved for standard, by striking thereon the lion or leopard's head crowned, or one of them, before exposing them for sale. This order extended throughout the realm, and all adulterated wares were commanded to be defaced.

Subsequent to the date of this order, the Goldsmiths' Company became much more active in the discharge of their duties, especially in London and two miles round, which was generally considered to be the extent of their district; but their power and jurisdiction were really confined to no such narrow limits, for excepting only those towns to which assaying powers had been given by statute, they extended throughout the whole of England, with the right to punish offenders against the law, as provided by their Company and the various Acts of Parliament for the proper regulation and guidance of the trade.

The statute of 8 and 9 William III., c. 8, s. 9, 1697, changed the standard for silver in order to

prevent the conversion of the silver coins into plate. The new standard for wrought silver was henceforth to be of the fineness of 11 ozs. 10 dwts. of fine silver per pound troy, and 10 dwts. alloy. With the establishment of this standard, which was compulsory, a new era commenced in the hall-marking system. After the date referred to above, all plate or silver wares were forbidden to be made or offered for sale unless of the aforesaid fineness, and impressed with the following new marks of assay at Goldsmiths' Hall—unless such wares as, in respect to their smallness, were incapable of receiving the marks assigned to the standard. The newly appointed marks which were introduced with this standard were to be the *lion's head erased* and the figure of a woman commonly called *Britannia*, in place of the *leopard's head* and *lion* heretofore mentioned as being put on gold and silver wares. The date mark and the maker's mark were also added to every separate piece of silver ware submitted to the Hall for assay. There were, therefore, at this date four marks impressed upon articles assayed and stamped at Goldsmiths Hall. These marks were ordered to be affixed upon all silver wares, except such as were too small to receive them, on pain of forfeiture of the whole of the work. A penalty was likewise im-

posed for every article which had been marked by the Goldsmiths' Company and afterwards found of inferior quality to the standard authorised by this Act, or which otherwise contravened any of its provisions.

Much diversity of opinion has existed with reference to the mark which actually represents the standard, but there can be little doubt that the figure *Britannia* is the true standard mark by which the quality should be distinguished, and that the *lion's head erased* is the private mark of the Company of Goldsmiths, who stamped the work; and as this was used by the Company in London, it must necessarily represent the arms of that Company, for at the time we are speaking of provincial assay offices were altogether ignored; and wrought silver not bearing the arms of the Goldsmiths' Company of London was not to be taken at the Mint as standard, but as uncertain silver. The lion's head erased is the *hall mark proper* of the London Hall, and shows that the work has been assayed and stamped there. But as this peculiar mark, as well as all other town or municipal marks, will be referred to hereafter under its proper heading with all necessary details, it does not call for any particular notice at present.

In the year 1700, by the statute 12 William III.,

c. 4, s. 1 and 2, Chester, York, Exeter, Bristol, and Norwich were severally incorporated under the name of the Company of Goldsmiths; and in 1702, 1 Anne, Newcastle-upon-Tyne was added to the list of assay towns. Nearly all these towns, as we have before remarked, were chosen for the purpose of assaying gold and silver wares, some of them as early as 1424, 2 Henry VI., c. 14; and in addition to the above the following places were also selected at an early date, viz. Lincoln, Salisbury, and Coventry; but many of these never availed themselves of the privilege. Others too had long since discontinued assaying, for we find no reference to them in the Act 8 and 9 William III., which empowered the Goldsmiths' Company of London alone to assay and stamp wrought silver of the new standard; and all silversmiths residing in provincial towns were compelled to send their work to the London Hall to be assayed and marked with their marks of the *lion's head erased*, i.e. separate from the body, and *Britannia*. All wrought silver made between the years 1696 and 1701 will, therefore, bear these marks of the London Hall only, indicating the standard of quality and place of assay.

The Acts of 1700 and 1702 conferred the right of assaying and marking on the provincial towns

therein named. The standard mark was to be the same as for London, namely, the figure *Britannia* for the new standard, which was the only legal one at that time; the London hall mark was also stamped on silver wares at all these assay towns, as was also the town or city arms of the various companies, which constituted their hall mark. All these distinguishing marks will be fully described hereafter, when we come specially to treat of hall marks. The cause of this extension of the privilege to country towns was in a measure due to the large demand for manufactured silver. In consequence of the old plate having been sold by his Majesty's subjects to the Mint to be coined into money, wrought silver wares had become scarce; and as the London Hall was charged with marking all the new standard throughout the kingdom—an arrangement which caused much inconvenience to the goldsmiths and silversmiths in distant parts—the above Acts were passed to remove those difficulties.

In the year 1719, by 6 George I., c. 2, s. 1 and 41, the former standard of 11 ozs. 2 dwts. was revived concurrently with the new standard of 11 ozs. 10 dwts. The reason assigned for this re-enactment was, that experience had taught that wrought silver of the new standard was not so

durable or serviceable as the other standard ; it was therefore enacted that after the 1st of June, 1720, the old standard should be restored.

Section 2 enacts that no silversmith shall be obliged to manufacture silver work according to the new standard, thus removing the compulsory powers contained in the previous statute.

Section 41 enacts that all wrought plate shall not be made less in fineness than 11 ozs. 10 dwts., or 11 ozs. 2 dwts., and each separate standard shall be severally impressed with distinguishing marks—namely, the *lion's head erased* and *Britannia* to be the standard marks for 11 ozs. 10 dwts., and a *lion passant* and a *leopard's head* to be the standard marks for silver of 11 ozs. 2 dwts. Those for the country assay offices are not mentioned in this statute. The above were to be the marks of the standard and of the Hall of the London assay office, but these, in addition to the city or town mark, were also stamped upon wrought silver wares at all the provincial assay offices with the permission of the Goldsmiths' Company.

In the year 1739, by Act 12 George II., chap. 26, the standard for gold wares was fixed at 22 carats of fine gold and 2 carats of alloy, and silver at not less than 11 ozs. 2 dwts. of fine silver in every pound weight troy, but it was not to extend to

the fancy-work of jewellers set with stones and other small works of a similar kind.

Section 5 of this Act enacts that no person shall make or offer for sale wrought gold or silver wares until marked as follows: gold of 22 carats with the *lion passant* and *leopard's head* as a standard mark; silver of the old standard of 11 ozs. 2 dwts., with the *lion passant* and *leopard's head*; and the new standard of 11 ozs. 10 dwts. with the *lion's head erased* and *Britannia*, to denote the standard. We have felt it our duty to put both marks to each of the standards named, in order to avoid, if possible, any chance of error or misconception as to the possible standard mark, as both were freely used at the time to which we are referring, not only in London, but at all the provincial towns which had commenced marking under the provisions of a previous statute (12 William III.). But according to the Act 12 Geo. II., these marks were evidently intended to be used only by the London Company of Goldsmiths, as the 5th section goes on to state in describing the London marks, "or with the maker's mark and with the marks appointed to be used by the assayers at York and other places." It does not, however, state what those marks were.

Of course there were others besides the standard

mark stamped at all the Halls, some of which have already been described, and others will be in due course, such as the Hall or City mark, the date mark, &c.

It will here be noticed that the standard mark for gold of 22 carats and for silver of 11 ozs. 2 dwts. is the same, namely, the *lion passant*.

In the year 1773, by 13 George III., c. 52, Birmingham and Sheffield were made assay towns. The standard mark for both towns was to be a *lion passant* for the old standard, and *Britannia* for the new one of 11 ozs. 10 dwts. Both towns were empowered to stamp this quality of silver, but it is now hardly ever required. This Act, which was purely a local one, did not give either town the power to assay and mark gold.

In the year 1798, by 38 George III., c. 69, a lower standard for gold, namely, 18 carats, was allowed concurrently with the former one of 22 carats, but with the mark of a *crown* to indicate this quality, instead of the *lion passant*. This standard mark was to be used alike in all the assay offices in England for this quality of gold—that is to say, at all those offices which previously had the power to assay and mark gold wares. The reason for the change in thus lowering the gold standard is stated to be for the advantage of the

manufacturers, especially for those who make watch cases, to enable them to compete with foreigners, who made cases of lower standards, and which enabled them to sell them at lower prices than the English. The statute permitted gold wares to be manufactured for sale or exportation of the standard named, and its provisions extended to all provincial assay towns having the right to mark gold wares under a previous statute.

In the year 1824, by 5 George IV., c. 52, Birmingham was further empowered to assay and mark gold, and by that Act it is now chiefly regulated. It repealed the former statute of 13 George III. so far as it related to Birmingham. The standard mark is the same as that used in London for all the qualities required to be marked, both for gold and silver, but the arms of the Company are different.

In the year 1844, by 7 and 8 Victoria, c. 22, s. 15, the *crown* was substituted for the *lion passant* for all future wares of the old gold standard of 22 carats, with the quality mark 22, as we have shown under that designation. But this Act only applied to England.

In the year 1854, by 17 and 18 Victoria, c. 96, lower standards of gold were allowed to be marked at the various Halls having the requisite authority

to do so. This Act permitted three lower standards, in addition to those already respectively described, which were to be of 15, 12, and 9 carats, and which were to be stamped with figures denoting the quality or fineness only. These figures have been fully noticed under their more appropriate title as quality marks. No *crown* is put on any of these standards. This statute applied to the whole of the United Kingdom, where it is still in force.

The above comprise all the principal statutes which apply to the assaying and marking of gold and silver wares, and which regulate all the assay offices in England.

When gold and silver articles are marked in Scotland or Ireland, the standard mark is different from the *crown* and *lion passant* of England, as we will now explain.

Scotland.—There are only two assay towns in Scotland, namely, Edinburgh and Glasgow. Edinburgh is the oldest, and its first standard mark was the assay master's initials, which continued to be employed until the year 1759, when the Company substituted the *thistle*. The Acts 6 and 7 William IV., c. 69, 1836-7, fixed the *thistle* as the standard mark for gold of 22 carats, but without the figures 22, which represent the quality.

For gold of 18 carats, the *thistle* and the figures 18, with the additional stamp of a *crown*.

For the old standard silver of 11 ozs. 2 dwts., the *thistle*, being the same as for 22-carat gold.

For the new standard silver of 11 ozs. 10 dwts., the *thistle* and *Britannia*.

The present standard marks are the same as those already described for both qualities of silver ; but for gold of 22 carats the figures 22 have been added to the *thistle*, and the *crown* has been omitted from the 18-carat quality ; in all other respects the standard marks are the same.

Glasgow, the other Scotch assay town, is regulated by the 59 George III., c. 28, which relates to the assaying and marking of gold and silver wares in Glasgow and forty miles round, and which confers upon that city the privilege of marking all gold and silver wares made in that district. The standard mark is a *lion rampant* for gold of 22 or 18 carats, with the additional figures of 22 or 18.

For silver of the old standard, the *lion rampant* is employed, while for the new standard the figure *Britannia* is added.

The lower standards of 15, 12, and 9 carats gold have the standard mark of the *lion rampant*, as well as the quality marks of the above figures, but the decimal figures are omitted at this assay office.

Ireland.—We have now to speak of the Irish standard marks—the *harp*, and subsequently the *harp crowned*, being the original or earliest standard gold assay marks. The harp was used prior to the grant of incorporation by Charles I., 1638, which charter embodied the same gold and silver standards as were then in use in England, namely, 22 carats for gold, and 11 ozs. 2 dwts. for silver per pound troy. The *harp crowned* was adopted at this time for both gold and silver standards, and it has continued in use ever since. Dublin is the assay town for Ireland, and with the exception of a period of about six years, when one was established at a place called “New Geneva,” there has not been any other assay office there. In Dublin its title is that of “The Goldsmiths’ Company.”

In the year 1784, by the Acts 23 and 24 George III., c. 23, s. 3, two new standards were introduced for gold, in addition to that of 22 carats, which was until then the only one, namely, 20 and 18 carats, the Act 3 Geo. II. only allowing of the former one. The lower standards were authorised in order to promote and encourage the manufacture of gold and silver wares in Ireland.

In the year 1807, 47 George III., c. 15, s. 3, these standards were further legalised and continued, and are now still in use.

The standard marks were the same as before : for the higher quality, a *harp crowned*, with the figures 22 added; for gold of the second standard, or 20 carats, a *plume of three feathers* and the figures 20; for gold of the third standard, or 18 carats, a *unicorn's head* and the figures 18; for silver of 11 ozs. 2 dwt., a *harp crowned*. No new standard silver is marked at this assay office.

In the year 1854, 17 and 18 Victoria, in addition to the former, three lower standards were allowed to be marked for gold wares only, which were to be stamped with particular marks to distinguish them. The standards thus further authorised were 15, 12, and 9 carats, with the following figure-marks stamped upon them as a guarantee of their true quality: 15·625, 12·5, 9·375 respectively, in one punch. There is no *standard mark proper*, of a *harp crowned*, put upon any of these standards, being *quality* marks only, the prominent features of which have already been enlarged upon under their more appropriate title by that name; further details are, therefore, rendered unnecessary.

The following table comprises the present standard marks of all the legal hall-marked qualities in the United Kingdom, together with the numerals representing the same, by which they can be more readily distinguished the one from the other.

ENGLAND.

Gold of 22 carats	Crown and 22.
Gold of 18 carats	Crown and 18.
Gold of 15 carats	15·625.
Gold of 12 carats	12·5.
Gold of 9 carats	9·375.
Silver of 11 ozs. 10 dwts. . . .	Britannia.
Silver of 11 ozs. 2 dwts. . . .	Lion Passant.

EDINBURGH.

Gold of 22 carats	Thistle and 22.
Gold of 18 carats	Thistle and 18.
Gold of 15 carats	15.
Gold of 12 carats	12.
Gold of 9 carats	9.
Silver of 11 ozs. 10 dwts. . . .	Thistle and Britannia.
Silver of 11 ozs. 2 dwts. . . .	Thistle.

GLASGOW.

Gold of 22 carats	Lion Rampant and 22.
Gold of 18 carats	Lion Rampant and 18.
Gold of 15 carats	Lion Rampant and 15.
Gold of 12 carats	Lion Rampant and 12.
Gold of 9 carats	Lion Rampant and 9.
Silver of 11 ozs. 10 dwts. . . .	Lion Rampant and Britannia.
Silver of 11 ozs. 2 dwts. . . .	Lion Rampant.

DUBLIN.

Gold of 22 carats	Harp Crowned and 22.
Gold of 20 carats	Plume of Feathers and 20.
Gold of 18 carats	Unicorn's Head and 18.
Gold of 15 carats	15·625
Gold of 12 carats	12·5.
Gold of 9 carats	9·375.
Silver of 11 ozs. 2 dwts. . . .	Harp Crowned.
Silver of 11 ozs. 10 dwts. . . .	Not marked here.

Having somewhat exceeded the space we originally intended to be devoted to the standard mark (but, in view of presenting a clear elucidation of the subject, which is very important, less detail would not have sufficed), we now pass on to—

The Hall Mark.

This is the mark of the hall of the city or town at which the marking takes place.

It is, therefore, municipal, and denotes severally the *arms* of the assay towns, as established by them to represent the private mark of their hall. It thus distinguishes the place of marking. The first hall mark of the London Company of Goldsmiths appears to have been a *leopard's head*, and this has continued from the earliest times down to our own, although it has been several times altered to meet existing requirements. The *leopard's head*, as ordered to be put on gold and silver work by the Statute 28 Edward I., c. 20 (A.D. 1300), appears to have been acknowledged more as a standard mark than as a hall mark properly so called, in contra-distinction to the standard mark, which denotes the fineness of the quality.

In the year 1336 the Goldsmiths' Company gave notice that the *leopard's head crowned* was in future

to be their hall mark, and this was secured to them by the subsequent statute of 17 Edward IV., c. 1, 1477. It was continued down to the year 1696, at which date it was altered, with the change in the standard, to the *lion's head erased*. The *lion passant* had, prior to the date mentioned, been the recognised standard mark of the Goldsmiths' Company, and, consequently, the *leopard's head crowned* had, subsequent to the introduction of the *lion passant*, then called her Majesty's lion, become distinguished as the hall mark proper of the London Assay Office. Up to the time we are alluding to the impress of the *leopard's head and crown* was rather large, but in after years it was much smaller. In the year 1697 the London hall mark for the new standard silver then introduced was the *lion's head erased*. From 1697 to 1701 the new standard was only stamped in London, the provincial assay offices having never really established themselves for carrying on continuous operations in assaying and marking. At the time of the passing of this Act for changing the silver standard, 8 and 9 William III., c. 8, sec. 9, some of the most ancient places of assay were not in existence, whilst others had several times previously discontinued their operations and afterwards recommenced them, so that at the time of the passing of the Act of Par-

liament last mentioned it is highly probable that very few, if any, could be found doing any of the assaying and marking which they had formerly been privileged to do.

In the year 1700 an Act was passed (12 William III., c. 4, s. 1 and 2), whereby Chester, York, Exeter, Bristol, and Norwich—Newcastle-upon-Tyne was included in 1702—became incorporated, and companies were established in these several towns for the purpose of assaying and marking wrought gold and silver wares, if found of the proper standard required by law. For gold, the *leopard's head crowned* was still continued as the London hall mark until the year 1823, when it was deprived of its *crown* and also denuded of its *mane and beard*. The size of the head was likewise reduced, and it has ever since remained the same for the London hall mark, both for gold and silver wrought wares.

The first hall mark for Chester was the old city arms, consisting of three *demi-lions and a wheatsheaf*, but since 1779 it has been a *sword between three wheatsheaves*, which is now the Chester hall mark proper. In addition to this, articles were also stamped with the *leopard's head*, but this has been discontinued since the year 1839.

The hall mark for York was *five lions on a cross*,

the *leopard's head* being also impressed as an additional mark. This assay office has now become extinct.

The hall mark for Exeter is a *castle with three towers*. The original hall mark for this town was a castle with *two* towers, containing some object on the top of one of them, which was shorter than the other. This was previous to the year 1800, at which date it was changed to the castle with *three* towers. The *leopard's head* was also used, but after the year 1784 it was omitted from the Exeter stamps.

Bristol did not choose to avail itself of the powers conferred upon it in the year 1700 by the Act of 12 William III., consequently it had no hall mark.

The hall mark for Norwich was a *castle and lion passant*. Like York, it has now discontinued to avail itself of its privileges. The stamp of the *leopard's head* was formerly employed, when this town carried on its operations of assaying and marking, in conjunction with the city mark.

The hall mark for Newcastle-upon-Tyne is *three castles*. The *leopard's head crowned* is now also impressed upon both legal standards for silver wares in this town in place of the leopard's head *only*, as formerly.

In the year 1773 Birmingham and Sheffield were empowered to assay and stamp silver of both

qualities. For Birmingham the hall mark is an *anchor*, and for Sheffield it is a *crown*. The hall mark and date mark are sometimes combined in one stamp at the latter place. The London hall mark for the higher silver standard, namely, the *lion's head erased*, was from the first omitted from this standard at both these assay offices.

The hall mark for Edinburgh is a *castle*, introduced in the year 1483; and for Glasgow it is a *tree growing out of a mount, with a bird on the top branch, a bell on the left-hand lower branch, and a fish across the trunk with a little ring in its mouth*. This hall mark dates from the year 1819.

The hall mark for Dublin is the figure of *Hibernia*; it was first used in the year 1730, and is still continued. This mark applies to all the standards, both of gold and silver, that can be marked. No new standard silver is, however, marked in Ireland.

Having now given a description of the *hall marks proper* for the different assay towns, we cannot do better in closing this part of our subject than to sum them up in the following form :—

The Present Hall Marks of the various Assay Towns.

- | | | | | |
|---------------|---|---|---|-------------------|
| 1. London | . | . | . | A Leopard's Head. |
| 2. Birmingham | . | . | . | An Anchor. |

- | | | | | |
|------------------------|---|---|---|-------------------------------------|
| 3. Chester | . | . | . | A Sword between Three Wheatsheaves. |
| 4. Sheffield | . | . | . | A Crown. |
| 5. Exeter | . | . | . | A Castle with Three Towers. |
| 6. Newcastle-upon-Tyne | . | . | . | Three Castles. |
| 7. Edinburgh | . | . | . | A Castle. |
| 8. Glasgow | . | . | . | A Tree, Bell, and Fish. |
| 9. Dublin | . | . | . | Hibernia. |

These are all the cities or towns having assaying and stamping powers accorded to them in the United Kingdom at the present time; and the place of assay of any piece of wrought gold or silver may at once be ascertained by a glance at the hall mark, which will indicate one or other of the assay towns already described, the symbol it bears in relation to the arms of one or other of the distinctive companies enabling the right result to be arrived at.

The Act of 8 William III., c. 8, which ordered the *lion's head erased* to be stamped upon the new silver standard by the London hall, has not been repealed by any subsequent statute. That hall has now, therefore, the right to use it as a hall mark in place of the *leopard's head*, but only for the new standard silver of 959 thousandths.

The Date Mark.

This mark denotes the year in which the article bearing it was made and hall marked. It is always

a variable letter of the alphabet, and is changed once every year, each company having the right to select its own particular letter. The official assay year does not change nor commence at the beginning of the new year, but varies at the different assay towns. In London it begins on the 30th of May in every year with a change of letter. Dublin adopts the practice of changing the date mark in accordance with the custom of the London Hall, but the yearly letter used is not the same as that of the London office in each corresponding year.

In Birmingham the assay year commences some time in the month of July, when the guardians of the assay office meet annually to appoint wardens and fill up any vacancies which may have occurred in their company; then the letter of the alphabet is changed for the next year.

Chester and Newcastle-upon-Tyne change their date letter marks on the 5th of August of each year; Exeter also does so in the month of August; Sheffield and Glasgow change in July, the same as Birmingham; and Edinburgh in September.

The whole twenty-six letters of the alphabet are used at only one assay office, namely, Glasgow. Edinburgh, Sheffield, Dublin, and Birmingham use twenty-five, omitting J; Newcastle-upon-Tyne

twenty-four, omitting J and V; London, Chester, and Exeter use only twenty letters, from A to U inclusive, V, J, W, X, Y, and Z now being always omitted. We have given the statute time for changing these letters at the different assay offices, but it is not always uniformly adhered to. If the letter denoting one year is A, the next year will be B, and so on throughout the whole alphabet, always omitting the letters above named in regard to the respective assay offices where they are not used.

On the completion of every cycle, which in London, Chester, and Exeter comprises twenty years, the alphabet is commenced again, the same twenty letters being employed in the next cycle; but the style of the letter is changed, a different type being now adopted to the former, and this continues all through the period, when it is again changed.

The London Assay Office marked the date of assay by means of a letter of the alphabet as early as the middle of the fifteenth century. The other assay offices have all stamped the year of marking with a variable letter-punch ever since the time of their incorporation, and some of them even previously to this.

The following table will illustrate the different kinds of letters which have been used by the

various assay offices from time to time as *date marks* :—

1. Lombardic Capitals	<i>AB</i>
2. Court Hand	<i>A B</i>
3. Italian	<i>A B</i>
4. Egyptian	<i>A B</i>
5. Roman Capitals	<i>A B</i>
6. Roman Small	<i>a b</i>
7. Old English Capitals	<i>A B</i>
8. Old English Small	<i>a b</i>
9. Small Italics	<i>a b</i>
10. Italic Capitals	<i>A B</i>

Such are the variable letters now stamped upon the multifarious kinds of gold and silver wares manufactured and marked in the United Kingdom, each one of which denotes a particular year of assay. The reason for changing the letter of the alphabet every year is in conformity with some of the provisions of the earlier statutes which provided, “that if any silver worse than sterling be marked with the company’s marks, the wardens and corporation for the time being shall make compensation to the persons grieved, and that if any such default *should happen* the letter on the work will tell in what year it was assayed and marked, and thus point to the officers of the assay office who had been so far negligent of their important duties as to pass inferior standards, and from them obtain more than a recompense.”

We have now arrived at the last of the marks, known as hall marks, which are impressed upon jewellery and plate, and which is styled

The Duty Mark.

This mark indicates the payment of the duty on every manufactured article of the two highest standards of gold and silver that is liable for it, and consists of the head, in profile, of the reigning sovereign—now the *Queen's head*. This is payable to the officers of the Goldsmiths' Company in the several towns where they are appointed receivers. Silver, both of the old and new standards, is marked with the *Queen's head* on every article liable to the duty, which until very lately was upon every article *hall-marked* or otherwise subject to the control of the assay office. No gold is stamped with the *Queen's head* below 18 carats in quality, as it pays no duty; 15, 12, and 9 carat gold, therefore, are never marked with the *Queen's head*. Neither do they bear the standard mark of the *crown*, as they are not ranked as standard qualities proper, and therefore are not liable for duty.

The duty is not calculated on the gross weight of the articles, but on five-sixths of the total weight, one-sixth now being always allowed for waste in

the finishing. This regulation commenced on the 24th of July, 1785, 25 George III., c. 64, s. 1, and was directed to be a deduction for finishing.

A tax was first imposed on plate in the year 1719, by 6 George I., c. 11, s. 4, which placed it at sixpence per ounce on all silver plate imported into or wrought in the United Kingdom, and liable to be controlled by the assay office. This mode of collecting the duty was soon found to be ineffectual as the manufacture of it increased, and as a substitute a yearly license was imposed of forty shillings, to be taken out by all workers and dealers in plate, A.D. 1758, 31 George II., c. 32, which repealed the previous statute. According to this enactment every person failing to take out a license was liable to a penalty of twenty pounds.

In the year 1759 the license was raised to five pounds (32 George II., c. 14) for every person trading in gold plate of two ounces, and silver of thirty ounces and upwards; persons dealing in gold not exceeding two pennyweights, or in silver not exceeding four pennyweights in one piece of work, to be exempted from taking out a license.

In the year 1784, by 24 George III., c. 53, a duty was again introduced in lieu of the license, which was also extended to gold wares. This Act

subjected gold wares to a duty of eight shillings per ounce, and silver wares to one of sixpence per ounce, and its provisions required the various assay officers to collect it, and also to stamp the work with the *King's head* as denoting the payment of it, in addition to the other marks already in use. This was the first introduction of *the duty mark* in regard to articles of plate and other wrought gold and silver wares in England.

In the year 1797, by 37 George III., c. 90, the duty on silver was raised to one shilling per ounce, whilst that on gold remained the same as before, namely eight shillings per ounce.

In the year 1803, by the Act 43 George III., c. 69, the former statute of 24 George III., c. 53, relating to the license, was repealed, and new licenses were authorised concurrently with the duty. These new licenses were to be taken out by persons trading in gold wares of more than two pennyweights and under two ounces, and in silver wares of more than five pennyweights and under thirty ounces. The cost was £2 6s. per annum for persons trading in gold wares of two ounces and upwards in weight, and in silver wares of thirty ounces and upwards £5 15s. per annum. These are the charges for licenses at the present time, which are still regulated by the above-named

Act. The duty has since been increased, as the following particulars will show.

In the year 1804, by 44 George III., c. 98, the duty on gold was increased to sixteen shillings per ounce, and on silver to one shilling and three-pence per ounce.

In the year 1815, by 55 George III., c. 185, the duty on gold wares was further increased to seventeen shillings per ounce, and on silver wares to one shilling and sixpence per ounce, to be calculated on five-sixths of the total weight of the work, one-sixth being allowed for waste in the finishing, watch cases being exempt from all duties as previously allowed by the statute 38 George III., c. 24. The duty now stands at these amounts respectively.

The amount is payable at the Hall at the time of handing in the work for assay, but if it is cut and broken up on account of its being of a lower standard than it should be, then the amount of duty is returned with the parcel of work. The charge for assaying and marking has to be paid just the same as if the work had passed the Hall.

The duty on silver of one and sixpence per ounce has lately been removed from all jewellers' work, with the exception of plate and plain finger rings. The duty of seventeen shillings per ounce on gold is

compulsory only on the various articles of plate, on wedding and mourning rings, and on plain half-round rings, and that only on the two superior qualities or standards of 22 and 18 carats.

In Scotland and Ireland the duty on all wrought gold and silver wares is the same as in England, the payment of which is indicated by the mark of the sovereign's head. This has been since the year 1784, Act 24 George III. for Scotland, and the year 1807, Act 47 George III., c. 15, s. 2 and 6, for Ireland, the figure of *Hibernia* having antecedently to this date represented the Irish duty mark. The licenses are the same as in England.

We have now described all the various marks that are stamped upon gold and silver wares of all the recognised standards, and we believe that sufficient details have been given to render the identification of any hall-marked article possible to any individual. The marks, as impressed upon the different qualities of gold of 22, 20, 18, 15, 12, and 9 carats, being somewhat different, as well as the *city arms* of the various assay towns now existing in the United Kingdom, much care has been taken to point out their chief distinguishing features so as to present a ready means of identification of all the qualities, not only of gold but also of silver

both of the old and new standard. And if our remarks have been sufficiently lucid to afford the requisite knowledge in regard to any distinctive quality of hall-marked gold or silver ware, or the name of the maker of the same, the office or town where it was assayed, and the year of its manufacture, &c., then our purpose has been amply fulfilled.

The following summary will show the character and signification of the hall marks :—

Complete Table of Hall Marks.

1. The Initial Letter denotes the Maker's Name.
2. The Figures denote the Quality of Standard.
3. The Crown denotes the Standard for England.
4. The Arms of the Company denotes the Place of Assay.
5. The Variable Letter denotes the Year of Assay.
6. The Sovereign's Head denotes the Payment of Duty.

CHAPTER III.

Assay Towns of the United Kingdom.

IT is now more than six hundred years since the first introduction of a statute appointing and regulating the standard or standards to be employed in the manufacture of gold and silver wares in this country. Special places, or *halls*, have been fixed by subsequent Acts of Parliament for the purpose of testing and marking all wares subject to Government control with specific marks, as a safeguard to the public by indicating their genuineness, a charge being made at the halls for this proceeding. Here likewise the duty is paid, and any surplus, after the payment of working expenses, becomes a source of revenue to the Government. The towns possessing these privileges are called Assay Towns, and to one or another of these, all plate and other similar manufactured and duty-paying wares in the United Kingdom have to be sent, to be assayed and marked.

The first statute relating to assay was that of Henry III., A.D. 1238, and the main principles as then laid down have always been followed in the framing of all modern Acts bearing upon the subject, namely, that gold and silver wrought goods should be of uniform standards, and that the administration of the laws for maintaining and upholding such standards should be entrusted to certain companies or corporations. The companies which have been authorised or privileged to do so in England belong to the following towns, viz. London, Birmingham, Chester, Exeter, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, York, Sheffield, Bristol, Coventry, Lincoln, Norwich, and Salisbury; in Scotland, Edinburgh and Glasgow; in Ireland, Dublin and *New Geneva*. To these places particular attention will now be directed, commencing with the

London Assay Office.

The Goldsmiths' Company is one of the most ancient and important of the *Guilds of London*, and in the earlier days of assaying and hall-marking it had, under the authority of the Mayor, the entire and sole management of the assay of all gold and silver wares, until the manufacture of those wares had so increased as to render it absolutely impos-

sible to bring them under the control of their office. This led to the appointment of provincial assayers to conduct the business in the towns alluded to ; but although the function of controlling the standard fineness of jewellers' wares was conferred upon these places, it must be understood that some of them did not exercise it, and others have long since ceased to avail themselves of the privilege. We refer especially to Bristol, Coventry, Salisbury, Lincoln, Norwich, and York in England, and New Geneva in Ireland, at which places no marking ever takes place at the present time. All gold and silver wares now manufactured in Norwich are sent to the London Hall to be assayed and marked ; and those made in York are sent to Newcastle-on-Tyne, Chester, or London.

The assaying of gold and silver is said to have originated with the Royal Treasurer of Henry I., the Bishop of Salisbury ; and this was effected by means of the touchstone and a set of touch needles, in all probability the method which had been adopted from the very earliest times in this country as a crude test for ascertaining the purity of gold and silver.

The exclusive privilege of assaying the precious metals was conferred upon the Goldsmiths' Company of London by the statute 28 Edward I., c.

20, A.D. 1300, to which reference has already been made in an earlier part of this work. This company obtained a charter in the reign of Edward III., by which they were created a corporation, bearing the name of the *Wardens and Company of the Mystery of Goldsmiths of the City of London*, with perpetual succession and a common seal. Up to this time they had been simply a *Guild*.

In the year 1336 it was ordained by the Goldsmiths' Company that none of their craft should go to fairs or public places for the purpose of trade without having previously had all goldsmiths' work assayed before them as wardens of the mystery.

In the year 1369 the wardens directed their assayers to go from the Hall to the shops of all the jewellers in London, for the purpose of assaying all gold and silver work. By subsequent ordinances the wardens required the workers to bring their manufactures to the Hall to be assayed and verified as to their fineness.

In the year 1392, 16 Richard II., another charter was granted to the Goldsmiths' Company, which "gave license to the men of the said craft of Goldsmiths of the City of London to be a perpetual community or society of themselves, and to elect yearly from among themselves four wardens to

oversee, rule, and duly govern the said craft and community of goldsmiths."

In the year 1504, 20 Henry VII., another charter was granted, giving the wardens power to punish and commit to prison all offenders against the standards, which were to be kept at Goldsmiths' Hall in London, and "to break or cut up all work worse than standard."

In the year 1545 the Goldsmiths' Company were summoned before the council of the King for not complying with the precise text of this charter as regards the exactness of the assay. The company was indicted and had to pay a large sum of money to obtain the renewal of their charter.

In the year 1675 the Goldsmiths' Company issued their celebrated order concerning the standard, which is too well known to call for further comment.

In the year 1700, by the Act 12 William III., the Goldsmiths' Company of London was relieved of a portion of its burdens and responsibilities by the appointment of provincial assay offices with fixed districts allotted to them. These were established apart from the jurisdiction of the London Company, and they will be duly noticed under the headings of the several towns possessing such offices or halls.

The powers or privileges of the London Goldsmiths' Company have not been materially affected by any subsequent statute, except that of 12 George II., c. 26, which contains special provisions relating to the charges to be made for assaying and marking. Until that time they were wholly unauthorised, as regarded any statutory provision, from making any charge for their assays. The only remuneration till then allowed for the working expenses of the office was the four grains which were kept back out of every twelve ounces of work sent to be marked. It would thus appear that the company had conducted the business of their Hall at its own cost, at least, or nearly so. And the reason given in the statute authorising certain charges to be made, is for the benefit of the company, which had been at extra trouble and expense in assaying and marking wrought gold and silver wares, which had greatly increased of late in the various quantities of small wares, which previously had not been marked; they therefore asked for a financial scale, the better to enable them to defray such expenses of their Hall for the future, and to meet all subsequent contingencies.

Assay was instituted in England, as we have before intimated, in the thirteenth century, and the London Goldsmiths' Company marked the date

of their assays by a letter of the alphabet previous to the middle of the fourteenth century; and although we have no direct evidence in support of this statement, it is, nevertheless, highly probable that this was one of the three marks used by the London Hall at that date. This stamp began to be employed about the year 1487 as a date mark of the London Assay Office, and since 1561 it has appeared in a shield, but the form of the shield varies somewhat occasionally, as well as the kind of alphabet employed. A great variety of combinations being available in the matter of shields, it is unnecessary to enter into their several forms, so long as they all represent the same thing. The kind of alphabet is more important, and we append a table below, showing all the different kinds of type used in the various cycles of the London Hall, which, we may mention, is now in its twenty-third cycle.

London Assay Office Date Letters.

1437-8 to 1457-8,	Lombardic Capitals.
1458-9 „ 1477-8,	Unknown Type.
1478-9 „ 1497-8,	Lombardic Capitals.
1498-9 „ 1517-8,	Black Letter Small.
1518-9 „ 1537-8,	Lombardic Capitals.
1538-9 „ 1557-8,	Roman Capitals.
1558-9 „ 1577-8,	Black Letter Small.
1578-9 „ 1597-8,	Roman Capitals.
1598-9 „ 1617-8,	Lombardic Capitals.

1618-9	to	1637-8,	Italic Small.
1638-9	„	1657-8,	Court Hand.
1658-9	„	1677-8,	Black Letter Capitals.
1678-9	„	1696-7,	Black Letter Small.
1697-8	„	1715-6,	Court Hand.
1716-7	„	1735-6,	Roman Capitals.
1736-7	„	1755-6,	Roman Small.
1756-7	„	1775-6,	Black Letter Small.
1776-7	„	1795-6,	Roman Small.
1796-7	„	1815-6,	Roman Capitals.
1816-7	„	1835-6,	Roman Small.
1836-7	„	1855-6,	Black Letter Capitals.
1856-7	„	1875-6,	Black Letter Small.
1876-7	„	1895-6,	Roman Capitals.

The letter of the alphabet at present in use by the London Assay Office is E of the Roman capitals. The date of any piece of work may be correctly ascertained by commencing with the first year of the cycle, which always begins with A, and running through the years and the alphabet until the year of assay has been rightly attained, but always missing the letters omitted in the cycle, which are J, V, W, X, Y, and Z. For instance, the present cycle contains Roman capital letters as date marks. From June, 1876, to June, 1877, the letter A; from June, 1877, to June, 1878, the letter B; from June, 1878, to June, 1879, the letter C; from June, 1879, to June, 1880, the letter D; from June, 1880, to June, 1881, the letter E; and so on.

The London Assay Offices are in Foster Lane, and are open for the reception of work every day

of the week, from 8.30 A.M. until 9.30 A.M., except on Saturdays, when the work must be sent in before 9 A.M., as the offices close at 2 P.M. on that day, which gives a little more time for the assaying and marking process to be performed, and thus enables the work to be ready for delivery by or before the time of closing.

The holidays in the London Assay Office are Good Friday; Easter Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday; the Queen's Birthday; Whit Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday; Trial of the Diet, May 28th; Swearing in of the Wardens and Officers, May 29th; the Bank Holiday in August; Lord Mayor's Day; and Christmas Day, and the three following days.

London is empowered to mark all the standard qualities, both of gold and silver.

Chester Assay Office.

This office was called into existence in consequence of the goldsmith's art being much practised in that city, and because a mint had previously been erected for the purpose of coining the King's silver money. There is no record to enable us to fix the exact time when Chester first began to assay and mark the wrought wares of the goldsmith and silversmith. It is not mentioned in the earlier

statutes, nor in the Provincial Assay Act of the year 1423, 2 Henry VI., c. 14 ; but assaying operations appear to have been going on in Chester long before the date of its incorporation, which was in the year 1700, 12 and 13 William III., c. 4, and by the Act referred to, and that of 12 George II., c. 26, their proceedings are now regulated.

The assay office at Chester is under the control and management of the Goldsmiths' Company of that city. The goldsmiths, silversmiths, and plate-workers, who were inhabitants of the town, and who had served an apprenticeship to their trade, were incorporated under the Act, and in the year already mentioned, as "The Company of Goldsmiths," with power to appoint two persons as wardens of the office, the appointment to last but one year, unless such persons should be re-elected. No qualification was required for these offices beyond the fact of the candidates being town residents and members of the company.

The company was required to engage a thoroughly practical and competent assayer to do the work of testing the various gold and silver wares which were brought under his notice, and which was required to be performed in an accurate manner. The assayer, previous to entering upon his duties, must take the oath of office, which is

to guide him in his future operations ; its chief features being as follows : "To make no undue profit ; to detain four grains only from every pound of wrought work to put into the diet box, and four grains towards waste in making the assays ; to keep an account of all the gold and silver brought to be assayed, and to return the same, except the aforesaid eight grains to the pound ; to mark no gold or silver ware unless it be of the proper standard fineness ; not to assay anything unless it is marked with the maker's mark ; to render a proper and correct account to the wardens ; and not to put any gold or silver into the diet box but such as has been taken from the work which has passed the Hall as one of the standard degrees of fineness."

The diet box at this office is required to be securely fastened by means of three separate and distinct kinds of locks ; the respective keys are to be kept one each by the two wardens, and the remaining one by the assayer. It has also to be sent annually to the London Mint, at the option of the Lord Chancellor, for the diet to be tried in the same manner as the *Pyx* for the coin of the realm, in order to verify the fineness of the quality ; and if any irregularity is found to exist a penalty is imposed upon the company of £50 for every offence. The assayer is likewise liable for double the value

of the goods marked by him if of inferior standard to the legal ones.

Every goldsmith, silversmith, or plateworker residing in the city of Chester, and desiring to have his goods assayed and marked there, is required to enter his name, place of abode, and the kind of mark he uses, with the wardens before any work will be received.

The Act 12 George II., c. 26, imposed fresh regulations upon the wardens and assayers of Chester, as well as on the other provincial assay offices then in existence, relating to the quantity of solder to be used to every piece of work; also the state of the workmanship having reference to the finished article, *i.e.* its forwardness. They were also to ascertain if all the various pieces which compose an article were there for the purpose of marking, and to see that the maker's mark was properly struck thereon clear and visible; and they were not to allow any article to be marked unless they were fully satisfied on all these points. This duty is generally allotted to one of the wardens, who should be a goldsmith or silversmith. The wardens have power to break up or deface any work which the assayer shall report to them after three assays as of a lower standard than it ought to be.

The assay office at Chester is open every day of the week with the exception of Christmas Day, Good Friday, and Bank holidays. The officers consist of two wardens, one principal assayer and an assistant, a clerk, and a solicitor to the company. The offices are in Goss Street, and the hours of attendance are from 10 A.M. till the completion of the day's work. The date letter is changed on the 5th of August in each year. The following table comprises the different kinds of letters that have been used since the incorporation of the Company in the year 1700.

Chester Assay Office Date Letters.

1701-2	to	1725-6,	Roman Capitals.
1726-7	„	1751-2,	Italic or Script Letter.
1752-3	„	1776-7,	Roman Capitals.
1777-8	„	1796-7,	Roman Small a to u.
1797-8	„	1817-8,	Italic Capitals <i>A</i> to <i>V</i> .
1818-9	„	1838-9,	Roman Capitals <i>A</i> to <i>V</i> .
1839-40	„	1863-4,	Old English Capitals.
1864-5	„	1889-90,	Old English Small.

The present date letter is *r*, of the Old English small type, which type will continue to the end of the cycle, which is twenty-five years. This has always remained the same with the exception of the intermediate cycles, when it ran from *A* to *U* and from *A* to *V* consecutively, and afterwards con-

tinued again from A to Z, always omitting the letter J.

Chester marks all the standards.

York Assay Office.

This office was one of the most ancient of the places of assay, and was included in the statutes of the year 1423, 2 Henry VI., c. 14, and of 1700, 12 and 13 William III., c. 4, but it has several times discontinued its operations of assaying and marking, and is not now in existence as an assay town.

Formerly the business of this assay office was under the management of "The Company of Goldsmiths" of that city, and the same regulations were in force there as we have described in connection with Chester. Three-quarters of a century after the final Act of its establishment it was not continuing its business, but soon afterwards it again claimed its assay privileges, doing, however, very little work. In the year 1848 it is mentioned among other places as an assay town. The assay days were Tuesday and Friday in every week.

Exeter Assay Office.

This town was appointed, as we have seen, by the 12 and 13 William III., c. 4, A.D. 1700, to assay

and mark the standards for gold and silver wares, and there appear to be no records at the hall previous to this date. The Act, however, did not actually come into operation until the end of September, 1701. The Exeter goldsmiths seem to have welcomed the statute which conferred the privilege of assaying upon them, for they at once decided to put it into force.

The assay office is open every Tuesday and Friday, always excepting Good Friday and Christmas Day, and the place of business is in Bartholomew's Yard. Exeter only marks wedding-rings of 22-carat gold, and the old silver standard of 11.10 of silver and .9 of copper per pound, which respectively represent 11 ozs. 2 dwts. of fine silver, and 18 dwts. of copper, troy weight.

Exeter at first used twenty-four letters of the alphabet, J and U being omitted, and after the year 1796 only twenty letters, the same as London. Similar regulations govern this office as in the case of Chester. The officers in attendance are the warden, deputy-warden, assayer, and clerk. The name of the company is "The Goldsmiths' Company of Exeter."

Exeter Assay Office Date Letters.

1701-2 to 1724-5, Roman Capitals.

1725-6 „ 1748-9, Roman Small.

1749-50 to 1772-3,	Roman Capitals.
1773-4 ,,	1796-7, Roman Small.
1797-8 ,,	1816-7, Roman Capitals.
1817-8 ,,	1836-7, Roman Small.
1837-8 ,,	1856-7, Old English Capitals.
1857-8 ,,	1876-7, Roman Capitals.

In the earlier times no doubt most of the silver plate was marked at Exeter which had been made in the West of England, and that which was intended should be assayed and marked at Bristol was also sent there; for although Bristol was empowered to avail itself of all the rights and privileges of the other assay towns by the 2 Henry VI., A.D. 1423, and also by the 12 and 13 William III., A.D. 1700, it never took to itself the powers conferred upon it. It is therefore highly probable that the Exeter hall was mainly established for the convenience of the goldsmiths of that district.

Norwich Assay Office.

Very little need be said with regard to this place, inasmuch as it has since long ceased to assay and mark the wares of the goldsmith and silversmith. It did so, however, at an early period, and some specimens of national plate which were marked at Norwich are now in existence.

This city is mentioned in the Acts of 1423, 1462, and 1700 as a place of assay. In the year 1614

the "city arms" were delivered by the Mayor and Corporation to "The Goldsmiths' Company of the City of Norwich" as a hall mark, consisting of a *castle and lion*, and this is now frequently to be found stamped upon Norwich plate of the sixteenth century in conjunction with a *double rose*, which is likewise thought to denote the hall of Norwich.

Newcastle-upon-Tyne Assay Office.

This office is of very ancient date, being appointed by the 2 Henry VI., c. 14, 1423; 2 Edward IV., 1462, and 12 and 13 William III., c. 4, 1700, to assay and mark all wares as ordained by the statutes, and is one of the most interesting of the local trade companies. In September, 1536, the goldsmiths were associated with the glaziers, plumbers, pewterers, and painters, and as far back as the year 1249 there were goldsmiths in Newcastle, for in that year the King, Henry III., appointed four of the most prudent and trusty among them to the office of "moneyers and keepers of the King's Mint in Newcastle; also two fit and competent goldsmiths to be assayers of the money made there." These offices were never regularly filled up, and it is not known how long the Mint existed there.

In the year 1717 the goldsmiths separated from

the trades above referred to, but fifteen years before this a regular assay-master was appointed to the company, as the goldsmiths' and silversmiths' trade had then become of considerable importance, wedding-rings and spoons being the chief articles of manufacture, and these were tested by the assayer of "The Goldsmiths' Company of Newcastle-upon-Tyne."

After separating from the other trades, the goldsmiths took up their abode in Dean Court, and there established their *Assay Hall*, where it still exists. The assay office in Newcastle is not a showy or pretentious building, but a quaint old institution, and is probably in much the same condition now as it was formerly. It is subject to the same regulations as the other provincial assay offices described in connection with this subject.

This assay office is open for business on Tuesday and Friday mornings at 9 A.M., but it is closed on Good Friday and Christmas Day.

Newcastle-upon-Tyne Assay Office Date Letters.

1702-3	to	1720-1,	Roman Capitals.
1721-2	„	1739-40,	Black Letter Capitals.
1740-1	„	1761-2,	Roman Capitals.
1769-70	„	1790-1,	Script Capitals.
1791-2	„	1814-5,	Roman Capitals.
1815-6	„	1838-9,	Roman Small.
1839-40	„	1863-4,	Roman Capitals.
1864-5	„	1887-8,	Roman Small.

The Newcastle-upon-Tyne office at the commencement of and during the first of the cycles, used only nineteen letters, from A to T, omitting the J; during the next two cycles, ending with the year 1790-1, twenty-two letters were used, from A to W, omitting J, X, Y, Z; then there was a lapse of eight years between these cycles. During the fifth and sixth cycles twenty-four letters were employed, the J and V being omitted; during the seventh cycle only the V was omitted, twenty-five letters being used; and throughout the present cycle the letters J and V are intended to be omitted, which cycle will close with the year 1887-8. The present date letter is r of the Roman small type.

All the standards are assayed and marked at this hall without exception.

Birmingham Assay Office.

This office was established in the year 1773, Act 13 George III., c. 52, which specially related to Birmingham. It is now, perhaps, the most important of all the assay offices in the United Kingdom, judging from the extent of the business carried on within its precincts. This has comprised between four and five hundred assays daily, during a period of one of the greatest depressions the jewellery trade has probably ever experienced.

On the 2nd February, 1773, the manufacturers of silver wares in Birmingham, with Matthew Boulton at their head, presented a petition to Parliament asking for the establishment of an assay office in their town, stating that the manufacture of silver plate might be considerably improved thereby, and complaining of the inconvenience under which they laboured in having to send their goods to London or Chester, the two nearest assay offices. The Goldsmiths' Company of London, as well as the manufacturing goldsmiths of the City of London, opposed the prayer of the petitioners, which was, however, granted, and Birmingham was made an assay town under the statute referred to above.

The Birmingham Assay Office was first opened at a public-house in New Street, known by the sign of the "King's Head," and occupied by one Henry Read, where the business was carried on for nine years. As the work increased this accommodation was found insufficient, three small rooms only being set apart for that purpose. In the year 1782, therefore, the offices were removed to more convenient premises in Bull Lane, which were occupied for a period of eighteen years. The next removal was made in the year 1800 to Little Colemore Street, where the business was conducted

for sixteen years, and at the end of that time it was again removed to the late offices in Little Cannon Street, which had previously been a Baptist Chapel. In consequence of the enormous increase in the work of the office these premises had to be enlarged in 1867, and again in 1873, but they were still found unequal to the requirements of the local jewellery trade. On the 14th of July, 1877, another removal was made to far more elaborate and extensive premises—built specially for the purpose—at the corner of Newhall Street and Charlotte Street, on the site formerly occupied by the Catholic Apostolic Church, where they still remain.

In order to illustrate to some extent the vast increase in the work of the Birmingham Assay Office, it may be interesting to state that for the first seventy-three years it was open but one day in the week; from 1846 to 1860, a period of fourteen years, it was open two days in the week, Mondays and Thursdays; from 1860 to 1866, a period of six years, it was opened three days in the week; from 1866 to 1871, a period of five years, it was open four days in the week; and from 1871 it was arranged to open the office every day of the week except Saturday. The quantity of gold wares assayed and marked in 1862-3 (year ending

30th June), was 19,010 ozs.; but during the same period of 1876-7 the quantity rose to 118,135 ozs., or an increase of more than six times the amount in fourteen years. The number of silver wares had likewise during the same period considerably increased; and now that the duty has been taken off all articles made of silver with the exception of plate and plain hoop finger rings, the figures must be something enormous.

The statute 13 George III., c. 52, which originally appointed Birmingham an assay town, for the purpose of assaying and marking wrought plate and other gold and silver wares (the provisions of which authorised the incorporation of a company for that object), was repealed, so far as it related to Birmingham, in 1824, by 5 George IV., c. 52—a local Act; and by this statute the Birmingham office is now regulated. The title of the company is, “The Guardians of the Standard of Wrought Plate in Birmingham.” All gold and silver workers residing in the town, or within thirty miles of it—the distance over which the office has jurisdiction—have to enter their names, places of abode, and the marks used by them at the assay office, if they desire to mark there and are makers of hall-marked goods.

The Birmingham Hall at first marked only

silver wares, but the Act 5 George IV. gave them power to assay and mark gold wares also. The number of guardians appointed by this Act is thirty-six, and of that number there must be not less than six nor more than nine practical goldsmiths or silversmiths. They are required to elect annually from four to six wardens, to appoint assayers and officers, and to make by-laws for the proper management of the office. The guardians meet annually in July for the election of the wardens, at which time the variable letter is changed.

Birmingham at first used all the twenty-six letters, but now employs only twenty-five, omitting the J. It has always been the custom to take the letters in regular alphabetical order, adopting for one cycle of twenty-six years the Roman, and for another cycle the Old English, letters of large and small type alternately.

The Birmingham Assay Office is now in its fifth cycle, which commenced in the year 1875, as illustrated by the annexed table of variable letters.

Birmingham Assay Office Date Letters.

1773-4	to 1798-9,	Roman Capitals.
1799-1800	„ 1824-5,	Roman Small.
1825-6	„ 1849-50,	Old English Capitals.
1850-1	„ 1874-5,	Roman Capitals.
1875-6	„ 1899-1900,	Old English Small.

The kind of alphabet, therefore, now employed is the Old English small letter, of which *f* represents the year 1880-1881 until the 1st of July.

Birmingham is empowered to mark all the standards, both of gold and silver.

Sheffield Assay Office.

The assay office at Sheffield was established at the same time as that at Birmingham, namely, in the year 1773, and was by the Act 13 George III., c. 52, incorporated under the title of "The Guardians of the Standard of Wrought Plate in Sheffield." The provisions of this statute, in conjunction with those of the 24 George III., c. 20—a local Act which authorised higher charges for assaying and marking—still regulate the management of this office. The district assigned to the hall at Sheffield is the town and twenty miles round. The office is open for receiving goods to be assayed and hall-marked between 9 and 10 A.M. on Mondays and Thursdays only, and is situated at 71, Fargate.

At Sheffield, silver only is assayed and hall marked.

Like Birmingham, Sheffield is now in its fifth cycle; the alphabet used at first was of the black

letter type, taken in a very irregular manner, beginning with **E** and finishing with **V**, thus :—

**E, F, A, B, H, S, A, C, E, D, G, I, T, N, L, M, H, E,
P, A, O, H, Z, F, U**

and comprising the letters of the alphabet.

In the next cycle twenty-five letters only were used of the Roman type, as follows : E, N, H, M, F, G, B, A, S, P, K, L, C, D, R, W, O, T, X, I, V, Q, Y, Z, U. In the third cycle only twenty letters were used, the type being the Roman small, beginning with a, and finishing with z, but omitting the letters i, j, n, o, w, and y ; in the fourth cycle the letters J and Q only were missed, there being twenty-four letters used of the Roman capital type ; and in the present cycle twenty-five letters are employed, leaving out the J only. The letter for the first portion of the year 1880-1881 is N, placed in a square shield with the corners cut off, and of the type known as the Egyptian.

The following table will more clearly explain the kind of type used in the various cycles at this assay hall :—

Sheffield Assay Office Date Letters.

1773-4	to 1798-9,	Black Letter Capitals.
1799-1800	„ 1823-4,	Roman Capitals.
1824-5	„ 1843-4,	Roman Small.
1844-5	„ 1867-8,	Roman Capitals.
1868-9	„ 1892-3,	Egyptian Capitals.

The changing of the alphabetical date letters takes place on the 5th day of July in each year, when the company meets for the purpose of electing new wardens and transacting other business pertaining to the management of the office.

Edinburgh Assay Office.

The assay office at Edinburgh is of ancient standing, and was formerly a guild of great importance to the goldsmiths of that city. As far back as the year 1483 the Municipal Government of Edinburgh granted certain privileges to them, and framed several rules for the guidance of the goldsmiths, which were the result of a petition from them to that institution.

In the year 1586 King James VI. granted letters patent to the masters of the goldsmith's craft in Edinburgh, which empowered them to search for gold and silver work, and ascertain whether it was of the standard fineness authorised by the various Acts of Parliament, and to seize all such as should be found deficient as a final result of testing. These powers were subsequently confirmed by Parliament.

The charter which gave to the goldsmiths all the rights of an incorporated society was that of King James VII., and is dated November 10, 1687. This

charter, while confirming all existing privileges, granted far more extensive powers to enable them to search places where the manufacture of gold and silver work was carried on, to punish offenders against the standard, and to enact statutes and laws for the proper regulation and guidance of the trade and for the management of their guild.

The title of the company at Edinburgh which has the supervision of manufactured gold and silver wares is "The Wardens of the Incorporation of Goldsmiths of the City of Edinburgh." This company is now chiefly regulated by the statute 6 and 7 William IV., c. 69, of the year 1836-7, which is entitled, "An Act to fix the Standards of Gold and Silver wrought Work in Scotland, and to provide for the Assaying and Marking of it."

The standards are the same as those appointed for England, to which reference has already been amply made when speaking of the standards and their marks of identification in the earlier part of this work.

The penalties for offences against the standards are much heavier than those authorised by the English statutes, both of which will be referred to further on, when we come to treat specifically of the offences against the statutes relating to hall marks and their punishments.

The Edinburgh Assay Office is open for business on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, from 11 A.M. until 3 P.M., the holidays being New Year's Day and the Queen's Birthday. The place of business is at 98, South Bridge. Until the year 1819 Scotland possessed no other assay office besides this one.

At the Edinburgh office all the standards are assayed and marked pertaining to both metals, gold and silver. At this hall the date mark is, as usual, a letter of the alphabet; and it has been invariably the custom to use all the letters excepting J, thus making, with a few exceptions only, cycles of twenty-five years. The letter is changed in the month of September every year. The date mark at this office can be traced as far back as the year 1681, when it first adopted a small black letter. The following table will show the various types used from that time until the present:—

Edinburgh Assay Office Date Letters.

1681-2 to 1704-5,	Black Letter Small.
1705-6 „ 1729-30,	Roman Capitals.
1730-1 „ 1754-5,	Italic Capitals.
1755-6 „ 1779-80,	Old English Capitals.
1780-1 „ 1805-6,	Roman Capitals.
1806-7 „ 1831-2,	Roman Small.
1832-3 „ 1856-7,	Old English Capitals.
1857-8 „ 1881-2,	Egyptian Capitals.

In the first cycle of the Edinburgh office only twenty-four letters appear to have been used, omitting the J and U; in the second twenty-five letters were used, missing the J only; this was repeated in the third cycle, but with a change of alphabet as per table. In the fourth cycle the letters J and W were omitted, but two R's were employed, while V was used for the last year of it; in the fifth cycle the J was again omitted, and G used for two consecutive years. In the sixth cycle the full alphabet was employed; in the seventh twenty-five letters were used, again omitting the J; and the same regulation exists with regard to the present cycle. The letter now in use by the Edinburgh hall is Y of the Egyptian capital type.

The hall mark or arms of the city is a castle, introduced in the year 1483.

The duty on plate and the charge for licenses are the same as in England, the payment of the former being indicated since the passing of the Duty Act in 1784 by the reigning sovereign's head.

Glasgow Assay Office.

This city had no assay office until the year 1819, when the Act 59 George III., c. 28, was passed. It relates only to Glasgow, and is entitled an "Act

for establishing an Assay Office in the City of Glasgow," to be managed by a company of goldsmiths, under the title of "The Glasgow Goldsmiths' Company." Its jurisdiction extends to Glasgow and forty miles round.

The office is in Buchanan Street, and is open on Tuesdays and Fridays from 10 A.M. till 4 P.M., the only holiday being New Year's Day. All the twenty-six letters of the alphabet have always been used at this hall, and the change of letter takes place in July.

Glasgow Assay Office Date Letters.

1819-20 to 1844-5, Roman Capitals.

1845-6 „ 1870-1, Old English Capitals.

1871-2 „ 1896-7, Egyptian Capitals.

The date letter for the year 1880-1881 was J, capital letter of the Egyptian type.

The peculiar mark or arms of the Glasgow Goldsmiths' Company, commonly known as their *hall mark*, is a tree growing out of a mount, with a bell pendant on the sinister branch, a bird on the top branch, and over the trunk of the tree a salmon in fesse, having in its mouth an annulet. This was introduced in the year 1819.

The gold and silver standards appointed for Scotland are exactly the same as those established in England.

Dublin Assay Office.

This office, which formerly conducted its business in Goldsmiths' Hall, Dublin, is now the only place of assay in that country. It has the exclusive right of assaying and marking all wrought gold and silver plate made in Ireland. The Company of Goldsmiths were granted a charter of incorporation by Charles I., on the 22nd of December, 1638, under the title of the "Wardens and Commonalty of the Mystery of Goldsmiths of the City of Dublin." This charter authorised for Ireland the standards then in use in England, namely 22 carats for gold, and 11 ozs. 2 dwts. for silver; but additional standards were legalised by subsequent Acts of Parliament, one of which, 23 and 24 George III., c. 23, allowed three other standards, of 22, 20, and 18 carats fine, in order to facilitate the manufacture of gold wares in Ireland, and more especially at a place called *New Geneva*. By the same Act an assay office was granted to that place for the special advantage of the watch-case makers resident there. It did not, however, continue long in existence, and the one at Dublin is now, as we have said, the only assay office in Ireland, and its authority extends to all parts of that country.

The powers of the Irish Goldsmiths' Company

were further extended by the Act 47 George III., c. 15, s. 2, of the year 1807, which ordered the mark of the *king's head* to be stamped upon all plate and other wrought work liable to the duty; and by the 17 and 18 Victoria, 1854, which ordered three lower standards to be marked to denote the true fineness of the same. These were 15, 12, and 9 carats respectively.

The duties on plate in Ireland are the same as those for England and Scotland, so also are the licenses to manufacture and deal in gold and silver wares; they were assimilated by the 5 and 6 Victoria, c. 82, which is an Irish Act. By the 5 and 6 Victoria, c. 47, s. 59, 60, 1843, the several assay offices are empowered to assay and mark *foreign* manufactures of gold and silver plate, and also to assay and mark at any of the assay offices in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland gold and silver plate manufactured in any part of the said United Kingdom; while previous to the passing of this statute each of the offices had power only to assay and mark wares manufactured in their own respective districts.

The Goldsmiths' Company in Dublin formerly used the harp alone, *i.e.* uncrowned, as a *town mark* or *hall mark*; the harp *crowned* being first employed as a *standard mark* in the year 1646. The figure of

Hibernia was first used as a *duty mark* in the year 1730 by order of the Commissioners of Excise, when a duty was first charged, the object of this additional stamp being to denote the payment of that duty. The figure of *Hibernia* now denotes the arms of the Dublin Company, and is therefore their recognised *hall mark*, by 47 George III., c. 15, s. 6, 1807, when, in addition to the retention of this stamp, which for the future was to be the hall mark, the king's head was employed to denote the duty stamp.

The variable letter, which is also used in Ireland as a date mark, was introduced by the Commissioners of Excise in the year 1646, on the adoption of the *harp crowned* as a standard mark. This is changed on the 29th or 30th of May every year. Dublin Assay Office has always made its cycles of twenty-five years' duration, taking the letters of the alphabet from A to Z, but omitting the J.

At the Dublin office all the gold standards are marked, and in addition to them 20-carat gold is also assayed and marked there. No new standard silver is, however, marked in Ireland.

Dublin Assay Office Date Letters.

1646-7 to 1670-1, Roman Capitals.

1671-2 „ 1695-6, Old English Capitals.

1696-7 „ 1720-1, Court Hand.

- 1721-2 to 1745-6, Old English Capitals.
- 1746-7 „ 1770-1, Roman Capitals.
- 1771-2 „ 1795-6, Roman Small.
- 1796-7 „ 1820-1, Old English Capitals.
- 1821-2 „ 1845-6, Roman Capitals.
- 1846-7 „ 1870-1, Roman Small.
- 1871-2 „ 1895-6, Egyptian Capitals.

In regard to the eighth cycle, from 1821-2 to 1845-6, we have marked it as Roman capitals in the column, but the first three letters of the cycle, a, b, c, were composed of small Roman type. In all other respects the variable date letters were as we have described them. The letter for the year 1880-1 was K.

We have now briefly noticed the whole of the towns empowered to assay and mark gold and silver wares of the respective standards allotted to each hall. We shall next proceed to detail such gold and silver wares that are exempt from all those Parliamentary statutes which regulate and control the present hall-marking system of the British Empire.

CHAPTER IV.

Synopsis of the Hall Marks for Jewellery, &c.

THE following table, comprising the hall marks that are now stamped upon the various standards, will enable the reader to comprehend more fully and readily their distinctive character and signification :—

22-CARAT WEDDING RINGS.

London. Six marks.

- | | | |
|-------------------|-----------|------------------------------|
| 1. G. E. G. | | The maker's initials. |
| 2. 22 | | The mark of 22 carats. |
| 3. Crown | | The mark of the standard. |
| 4. Leopard's head | | The London hall mark. |
| 5. E. | | The year of marking, 1880-1. |
| 6. Queen's head | | The payment of the duty. |

Chester. Six marks.

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------|------------------------------|
| 1. G. E. G. | | The maker's initials. |
| 2. 22 | | The mark of 22 carats. |
| 3. Crown | | The mark of the standard. |
| 4. Sword between three sheaves | | The Chester hall mark. |
| 5. r | | The year of marking, 1880-1. |
| 6. Queen's head | | The payment of the duty. |

Exeter. Six marks.

1. G. E. G. The maker's initials.
2. 22 The mark of 22 carats.
3. Crown The mark of the standard.
4. Castle with three towers . . . The Exeter hall mark.
5. d The year of marking, 1880-1.
6. Queen's head The payment of the duty.

Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Six marks.

1. G. E. G. The maker's initials.
2. 22 The mark of 22 carats.
3. Crown The mark of the standard.
4. Three castles The Newcastle hall mark.
5. r The year of marking, 1880-1.
6. Queen's head The payment of the duty.

Birmingham. Six marks.

1. G. E. G. The maker's initials.
2. 22 The mark of 22 carats.
3. Crown The mark of the standard.
4. Anchor The Birmingham hall mark.
5. f The year of marking, 1880-1.
6. Queen's head The payment of the duty.

Edinburgh. Six marks.

1. G. E. G. The maker's initials.
2. 22 The mark of 22 carats.
3. Thistle The mark of the standard.
4. Castle The Edinburgh hall mark.
5. Y The year of marking, 1880-1.
6. Queen's head The payment of the duty.

Glasgow. Six marks.

1. G. E. G. The maker's initials.
2. 22 The mark of 22 carats.
3. Lion rampant The mark of the standard.
4. Tree, fish, and bell The Glasgow hall mark.
5. J The year of marking, 1880-1.
6. Queen's head The payment of the duty.

Dublin. Six marks.

1. G. E. G. The maker's initials.
2. 22 The mark of 22 carats.
3. Harp crowned The mark of the standard.
4. Hibernia The Dublin hall mark.
5. **K** The year of marking, 1880-1.
6. Queen's head The payment of the duty.

20-CARAT WEDDING RINGS.**Dublin. Six marks.**

1. G. E. G. The maker's initials.
2. 20 The mark of 20 carats.
3. Plume of feathers . . . The mark of the standard.
4. Hibernia The Dublin hall mark.
5. **K** The year of marking, 1880-1.
6. Queen's head The payment of the duty.

18-CARAT ARTICLES PAYING DUTY.**London. Six marks.**

1. G. E. G. The maker's initials.
2. 18 The mark of 18 carats.
3. Crown The mark of the standard.
4. Leopard's head The London hall mark.
5. E The year of marking, 1880-1.
6. Queen's head The payment of the duty.

Chester. Six marks.

1. G. E. G. The maker's initials.
2. 18 The mark of 18 carats.
3. Crown The mark of the standard.
4. Sword between three sheaves . The Chester hall mark.
5. **r** The year of marking, 1880-1.
6. Queen head The payment of the duty.

W B STEPHENS

1880-1 1880-1

Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Six marks.

- | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|------------------------------|
| 1. G. E. G. | . | . | . | . | . | The maker's initials. |
| 2. 18 | . | . | . | . | . | The mark of 18 carats. |
| 3. Crown | . | . | . | . | . | The mark of the standard. |
| 4. Three castles | . | . | . | . | . | The Newcastle hall mark. |
| 5. 1 | . | . | . | . | . | The year of marking, 1880-1. |
| 6. Queen's head | . | . | . | . | . | The payment of the duty. |

Birmingham. Six marks.

- | | | | | | | |
|-----------------|---|---|---|---|---|------------------------------|
| 1. G. E. G. | . | . | . | . | . | The maker's initials. |
| 2. 18 | . | . | . | . | . | The mark of 18 carats. |
| 3. Crown | . | . | . | . | . | The mark of the standard. |
| 4. Anchor | . | . | . | . | . | The Birmingham hall mark. |
| 5. f | . | . | . | . | . | The year of marking, 1880-1. |
| 6. Queen's head | . | . | . | . | . | The payment of the duty. |

Edinburgh. Six marks.

- | | | | | | | |
|-----------------|---|---|---|---|---|------------------------------|
| 1. G. E. G. | . | . | . | . | . | The maker's initials. |
| 2. 18 | . | . | . | . | . | The mark of 18 carats. |
| 3. Thistle | . | . | . | . | . | The mark of the standard. |
| 4. Castle | . | . | . | . | . | The Edinburgh hall mark. |
| 5. Y | . | . | . | . | . | The year of marking, 1880-1. |
| 6. Queen's head | . | . | . | . | . | The payment of the duty. |

Glasgow. Six marks.

- | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|---|---|---|---|------------------------------|
| 1. G. E. G. | . | . | . | . | The maker's initials. |
| 2. 18 | . | . | . | . | The mark of 18 carats. |
| 3. Lion rampant | . | . | . | . | The mark of the standard. |
| 4. Tree, fish, and bell | . | . | . | . | The Glasgow hall mark. |
| 5. J | . | . | . | . | The year of marking, 1880-1. |
| 6. Queen's head | . | . | . | . | The payment of the duty. |

Dublin. Six marks.

- | | | | | | | |
|-------------|---|---|---|---|---|------------------------|
| 1. G. E. G. | . | . | . | . | . | The maker's initials. |
| 2. 18 | . | . | . | . | . | The mark of 18 carats. |

202412 0 0000

55.000 | 1.500.000

- | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 3. Unicorn's head | The mark of the standard. |
| 4. Hibernia | The Dublin hall mark. |
| 5. K. | The year of marking, 1880-1. |
| 6. Queen's head | The payment of the duty. |

18-CARAT ARTICLES NOT PAYING DUTY.

London. Five marks.

- | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. G. E. G. | The maker's initials. |
| 2. 18 | The mark of 18 carats. |
| 3. Crown | The mark of the standard. |
| 4. Leopard's head | The London hall mark. |
| 5. E | The year of marking, 1880-1. |

Chester. Five marks.

- | | |
|--|------------------------------|
| 1. G. E. G. | The maker's initials. |
| 2. 18 | The mark of 18 carats. |
| 3. Crown | The mark of the standard. |
| 4. Sword between three sheaves | The Chester hall mark. |
| 5. r | The year of marking, 1880-1. |

Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Five marks.

- | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. G. E. G. | The maker's initials. |
| 2. 18 | The mark of 18 carats. |
| 3. Crown | The mark of the standard. |
| 4. Three castles | The Newcastle hall mark. |
| 5. r | The year of marking, 1880-1. |

Birmingham. Five marks.

- | | |
|---------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. G. E. G. | The maker's initials. |
| 2. 18 | The mark of 18 carats. |
| 3. Crown | The mark of the standard. |
| 4. Anchor | The Birmingham hall mark. |
| 5. f | The year of marking, 1880-1. |

Edinburgh. Five marks.

1. G. E. G. The maker's initials.
2. 18 The mark of 18 carats.
3. Thistle The mark of the standard.
4. Castle The Edinburgh hall mark.
5. Y The year of marking, 1880-1.

Glasgow. Five marks.

1. G. E. G. The maker's initials.
2. 18 The mark of 18 carats.
3. Lion rampant The mark of the standard.
4. Tree, fish, and bell The Glasgow hall mark.
5. J The year of marking, 1880-1.

Dublin. Five marks.

1. G. E. G. The maker's initials.
2. 18 The mark of 18 carats.
3. Unicorn's head The mark of the standard.
4. Hibernia The Dublin hall mark.
5. K The year of marking, 1880-1.

15-CARAT ARTICLES OF ANY DESCRIPTION.**London. Four marks.**

1. G. E. G. The maker's initials.
2. 15·625 The mark of 15 carats.
3. Leopard's head The London hall mark.
4. E The year of marking, 1880-1.

Chester. Four marks.

1. G. E. G. The maker's initials.
2. 15·625 The mark of 15 carats.
3. Sword between three sheaves The Chester hall mark.
4. r The year of marking, 1880-1.

Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Four marks.

1. G. E. G. The maker's initials.
2. 15·625 The mark of 15 carats.
3. Three castles The Newcastle hall mark.
4. r The year of marking, 1880-1.

Birmingham. Four marks.

1. G. E. G. The maker's initials.
2. 15·625 The mark of 15 carats.
3. Anchor The Birmingham hall mark.
4. f The year of marking, 1880-1.

Edinburgh. Four marks.

1. G. E. G. The maker's initials.
2. 15 The mark of 15 carats.
3. Castle The Edinburgh hall mark.
4. Y The year of marking, 1880-1.

Glasgow. Five marks.

1. G. E. G. The maker's initials.
2. 15 The mark of 15 carats.
3. Lion rampant The mark of the standard.
4. Tree, fish, and bell The Glasgow hall mark.
5. J The year of marking, 1880-1.

Dublin. Four marks.

1. G. E. G. The maker's initials.
2. 15·625 The mark of 15 carats.
3. Hibernia The Dublin hall mark.
4. K The year of marking, 1880-1.

12-CARAT ARTICLES OF ANY DESCRIPTION.

London. Four marks.

1. G. E. G. The maker's initials.
2. 12·5 The mark of 12 carats.
3. Leopard's head The London hall mark.
4. E The year of marking, 1880-1.

Chester. Four marks.

1. G. E. G. The maker's initials.
2. 12·5 The mark of 12 carats.
3. Sword between three sheaves . . The Chester hall mark.
4. r The year of marking, 1880-1.

Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Four marks.

1. G. E. G. The maker's initials.
2. 12·5 The mark of 12 carats.
3. Three castles The Newcastle hall mark.
4. r The year of marking, 1880-1.

Birmingham. Four marks.

1. G. E. G. The maker's initials.
2. 12·5 The mark of 12 carats.
3. Anchor The Birmingham hall mark.
4. f The year of marking, 1880-1.

Edinburgh. Four marks.

1. G. E. G. The maker's initials.
2. 12 The mark of 12 carats.
3. Castle The Edinburgh hall mark.
4. Y The year of marking, 1880-1.

Glasgow. Five marks.

1. G. E. G. The maker's initials.
2. 12 The mark of 12 carats.
3. Lion rampant The mark of the standard.
4. Tree, fish, and bell The Glasgow hall mark.
5. J The year of marking, 1880-1.

Dublin. Four marks.

1. G. E. G. The maker's initials.
2. 12'5 The mark of 12 carats.
3. Hibernia The Dublin hall mark.
4. K The year of marking, 1880-1.

9-CARAT ARTICLES OF ANY DESCRIPTION.**London. Four marks.**

1. G. E. G. The maker's initials.
2. 9'375 The mark of 9 carats.
3. Leopard's head The London hall mark.
4. E The year of marking, 1880-1.

Chester. Four marks.

1. G. E. G. The maker's initials.
2. 9'375 The mark of 9 carats.
3. Sword between three sheaves The Chester hall mark.
4. r The year of marking, 1880-1.

Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Four marks.

1. G. E. G. The maker's initials.
2. 9'375 The mark of 9 carats.
3. Three castles The Newcastle hall mark.
4. r The year of marking, 1880-1.

Birmingham. Four marks.

1. G. E. G. The maker's initials.
2. 9'375 The mark of 9 carats.
3. Anchor The Birmingham hall mark.
4. f The year of marking, 1880-1.

Edinburgh. Four marks.

1. G. E. G. The maker's initials.
2. 9 The mark of 9 carats.
3. Castle The Edinburgh hall mark.
4. Y The year of marking, 1880-1.

Glasgow. Five marks.

1. G. E. G. The maker's initials.
2. 9 The mark of 9 carats.
3. Lion rampant The mark of the standard.
4. Tree, fish, and bell The Glasgow hall mark.
5. J The year of marking, 1880-1.

Dublin. Four marks.

1. G. E. G. The maker's initials.
2. 9'375 The mark of 9 carats.
3. Hibernia The Dublin hall mark.
4. K The year of marking, 1880-1.

NEW STANDARD SILVER PAYING DUTY.**London. Five marks.**

1. G. E. G. The maker's initials.
2. Britannia The mark of the standard.
3. Lion's head erased The London hall mark.
4. E The year of marking, 1880-1.
5. Queen's head The payment of the duty.

Chester. Five marks.

1. G. E. G. The maker's initials.
2. Britannia The mark of the standard.
3. Sword between three sheaves . . . The Chester hall mark.
4. r The year of marking, 1880-1.
5. Queen's head The payment of the duty.

Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Six marks.

1. G. E. G. The maker's initials.
2. Leopard's head crowned . . . The old London mark as formerly used.
3. Britannia The mark of the standard.
4. Three castles The Newcastle hall mark.
5. r The year of marking, 1880-1.
6. Queen's head The payment of the duty.

Birmingham. Five marks.

1. G. E. G. The maker's initials.
2. Britannia The mark of the standard.
3. Anchor The Birmingham hall mark.
4. f The year of marking, 1880-1.
5. Queen's head The payment of the duty.

Sheffield. Five marks.

1. G. E. G. The maker's initials.
2. Britannia The mark of the standard.
3. Crown The Sheffield hall mark.
4. N The year of marking, 1880-1.
5. Queen's head The payment of the duty.

Edinburgh. Six marks.

1. G. E. G. The maker's initials.
2. Britannia The mark of the standard.
3. Thistle The same mark as on gold.
4. Castle The Edinburgh hall mark.
5. Y The year of marking, 1880-1.
6. Queen's head The payment of the duty.

Glasgow. Six marks.

1. G. E. G. The maker's initials.
2. Britannia The mark of the standard.
3. Lion rampant The same mark as on gold.
4. Tree, fish, and bell The Glasgow hall mark.
5. J The year of marking, 1880-1.
6. Queen's head The payment of the duty.

OLD STANDARD SILVER PAYING DUTY.**London. Five marks.**

1. G. E. G. The maker's initials.
2. Lion passant The mark of the standard.
3. Leopard's head The London hall mark.
4. E The year of marking, 1880-1.
5. Queen's head The payment of the duty.

Chester. Five marks.

1. G. E. G. The maker's initials.
2. Lion passant The mark of the standard.
3. Sword between three sheaves The Chester hall mark.
4. r The year of marking, 1880-1.
5. Queen's head The payment of the duty.

Exeter. Five marks.

1. G. E. G. The maker's initials.
2. Lion passant The mark of the standard.
3. Castle with three towers The Exeter hall mark.
4. d The year of marking, 1880-1.
5. Queen's head The payment of the duty.

Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Five marks.

1. G. E. G. The maker's initials.
2. Leopard's head crowned The old London mark as formerly used.
3. Lion passant The mark of the standard.
4. r The year of marking, 1880-1.
5. Queen's head The payment of the duty.

Birmingham. Five marks.

1. G. E. G. The maker's initials.
2. Lion passant The mark of the standard.
3. Anchor The Birmingham hall mark.
4. f The year of marking, 1880-1.
5. Queen's head The payment of the duty.

Sheffield. Five marks.

1. G. E. G. The maker's initials.
2. Lion passant The mark of the standard.
3. Crown The Sheffield hall mark.
4. N The year of marking, 1880-1.
5. Queen's head The payment of the duty.

Edinburgh. Five marks.

1. G. E. G. The maker's initials.
2. Thistle The mark of the standard the same as gold.
3. Castle The Edinburgh hall mark.
4. Y The year of marking, 1880-1.
5. Queen's head The payment of the duty.

Glasgow. Five marks.

1. G. E. G. The maker's initials.
2. Lion rampant The mark of the standard the same as gold.
3. Tree, fish, and bell . . . The Glasgow hall mark.
4. J The year of marking, 1880-1.
5. Queen's head The payment of the duty.

Dublin. Five marks.

1. G. E. G. The maker's initials.
2. Harp crowned The mark of the standard the same as gold.
3. Hibernia The Dublin hall mark.
4. K The year of marking, 1880-1.
5. Queen's head The payment of the duty.

This tabular form comprises the whole of the marks now stamped upon goldsmiths' and silver-smiths' work of every possible description that is manufactured in the United Kingdom and is subject to the control of the Goldsmiths' Hall.

The duty mark (which is the head in profile of the reigning sovereign) indicates the payment of the duty; but this stamp is impressed only on those articles of gold and silver which are compulsorily liable for it, and which are described in a subsequent chapter. The duty is payable at the time of handing in the work for assay to the officers of the hall, who are appointed receivers for the Government. The chief use of the duty stamp, besides forming a source of revenue to the Government, is, that when plate and other wares which have paid duty, and have been duly struck with this stamp, are exported, a drawback is allowed, and this provides the means, in conjunction with the *hall mark* of the town where they were stamped, of knowing exactly what their duty was, and shows that it had been actually paid on the manufacture of those wares.

The marks of the various halls, as given above, are in every instance exactly the same when no duty is paid (with the exception of the Queen's head, which is then omitted) as those already

pointed out in describing the peculiar marks of each company of assayers. The introduction of these tables relating to the hall marks is to enable the reader to ascertain at a glance what the English hall marks are, and also that he may thoroughly understand the peculiar variations which exist with regard to the different assay offices in England, Scotland, and Ireland.

CHAPTER V.

Compulsory Hall-marking with its Exemptions.

GOLD wedding rings are required by law to be hall-marked according to the Statute 18 and 19 Victoria, c. 60. Gold mourning rings must also be hall-marked according to the provisions of the Act 24 George III., c. 53, s. 9, 1784, and other subsequent Acts ; also watch-cases, by the 25 George III., c. 64, and 38 George III., c. 24, when manufactured in gold and silver, which two Acts, however, exempted them from the payment of duty.

Silver plain hoop rings above 5 dwts. and plain gold rings of any weight whatever, which are regarded by Goldsmiths' Hall as wedding rings, must be marked and pay duty accordingly. Also every article of gold and silver ware which is used for domestic purposes and is designated *plate*—such, for instance, as tea-spoons, dessert-spoons, forks, cream-jugs, tea-pots, tea-trays, tea-urns, tea-kettles, knives, saucers, trencher-plates, salt-spoons, salt-

shovels, salt-ladles, tea-strainers, caddy-ladles, pieces to garnish cabinets or knife-cases, tea-chests, bridles, stands, or frames; shoe clasps, bottle tickets, blank seals, patch boxes, wrought seals, solid studs, solid sleeve buttons; necks, collars, and tops for castors, cruets, or glasses appertaining to any sort of stands or frames manufactured in silver; and every other article for domestic use of gold or silver work coming within the category of British plate.

With regard to mourning rings special regulations exist, in consequence of extensive frauds having been discovered in their manufacture; and to prevent such abuses in the future the wardens of the Goldsmiths' Company gave notice that on and after the 27th of February, 1843, the following rules and regulations would be strictly adhered to:—

1. Mourning rings are now marked free of duty. As to hoop mourning rings for enamelling, all linings shall be sent properly sized and flat, and all edges, bands, pierced bands, or belcher centres, and all other parts which are to be used with such linings, shall be sent properly sized, turned up, and soldered, in a fit state for either chasing, enamelling, engraving, or lapping, or for any other mode in which they are to be finished, except in the case of nurled edges, which shall be nurled before they

are sent to the Hall; and all and each of the aforesaid edges, bands, &c., shall be sent to the Hall with the linings for which they are intended, and shall be marked with a single mark.

2. All hooped mourning rings for enamelling to be finished without edges shall also be marked on the outside with a single mark.

3. All hall-marked rings, except wedding-rings, shall have a mark on the edges, and all other separate parts thereunto belonging.

4. All mourning rings made with heads shall be sent to the Hall fully mounted and cut open at one shoulder for marking, and shall have a single mark on the shoulder, unless they are made with belcher shanks, then the linings shall be sent flat and the ring belchered to receive the outside mark.

5. The wardens have directed, as a general rule, that no rings whatever shall be marked, unless they be sent to the Hall with all the separate parts complete, and if in mounting the same after having been properly marked the marks should be defaced, the same shall be re-marked without any further payment of duty, provided it be proved to the satisfaction of the deputy-warden that they have been before marked and have been so injured or defaced. The deputy-warden has likewise been directed to require that the several parts requisite

for the completion of every article or ware of gold shall be brought to the Hall to be assayed and marked before any separate and distinct part shall be allowed to pass. By order, &c.

Mourning rings were ordered to be marked by the 12 George II., c. 26, 1739, and pay duty accordingly.

Foreign plate of an ornamental character made before the year 1800 was exempted from compulsory hall-marking.

The following are the chief enactments dealing with foreign plate at the present time in this country. By the Statute 5 and 6 Victoria, c. 47, s. 59 and 60, 1842-3, "be it enacted that all gold and silver plate not being battered, which shall be imported from foreign parts after the commencement of this Act, and sold, exchanged, or exposed to sale within the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, shall be of the respective standards now required for any ware, vessel, plate, or manufacture of gold or silver wrought or made in England, and that no gold or silver plate so to be imported as aforesaid, not being battered, shall be sold, exchanged, or exposed to sale within the said United Kingdom until the same shall have been assayed, stamped, and marked, either in England, Scotland, or Ireland, in the same manner as any ware, vessel, plate, or manufacture of gold or silver

wrought or made in England, Scotland, or Ireland respectively is or are now by law required to be assayed, stamped, and marked; and that every goldsmith or other person whatsoever, who shall sell or expose to sale in England, Scotland, or Ireland any gold or silver plate so to be imported as aforesaid, and not being battered, before the same shall have been assayed, stamped, and marked as aforesaid, shall be subject and liable to the like penalties and forfeitures now by law imposed upon goldsmiths and silversmiths selling, exchanging, or exposing to sale in England, Scotland, or Ireland respectively any ware or manufacture of gold or silver plate made or wrought in England, Scotland, or Ireland respectively, and not assayed, stamped, and marked as required by law: provided always, that no article or ware of gold or silver so to be imported as aforesaid shall be liable to be assayed, stamped, or marked as aforesaid which would not be liable to be assayed, stamped, or marked if it had been wrought or made in England." "And be it enacted, that in order that gold and silver *plate* so imported as aforesaid may be assayed, stamped, and marked, it shall and may be lawful for any person to send the same to any assay office in the United Kingdom at which gold and silver plate is now by law required to be assayed, and

when so sent it shall be assayed, tested, stamped, and marked in such and the same manner, and be subject to such and the same charges, other than *Stamp Duty*, as if the same were *British* plate by law assayable in such office; and the wardens and officers in each such assay office, and the persons employed by them, shall have such and the same powers of assaying, touching, testing, marking, cutting, breaking, or defacing such gold and silver plate so sent to be assayed as are now by law exercisable by such wardens, officers, and other persons in respect of gold and silver plate now by law required to be assayed in such assay offices."

And by the 39 and 40 Victoria, c. 35, s. 2, "All gold and silver plate which shall be imported from foreign parts, and which shall be sent to any assay office in the United Kingdom at which gold and silver plate is now or shall at any time hereafter be by law required to be assayed, and which shall when so sent be then assayed, tested, stamped, and marked, shall, in addition to the marks for the time being used at such assay office for the purpose of marking *British* plate, be marked with the further mark of the letter F on an oval escutcheon, in order to denote that such gold or silver plate was imported from foreign parts, and was not wrought or made in *England, Scotland, or Ireland* ;

and the wardens and officers in such and every assay office, and the persons employed by them, shall have power to impress and mark, and shall impress and mark, such further and additional mark, before such plate shall be delivered out from such assay office.”—Dated February, 1879.

The following gold and silver articles are exempt from the control of the assay offices, in accordance with the provisions of the Statute of 12 George II., c. 26, s. 2 and 6, of the year 1739.

Gold Articles.

Jewellers' work, consisting of articles of every possible description in which stones are set—except mourning rings—such as gem, signet, and other fancy rings, collets for rings or other articles, chains, necklets, necklet beads, lockets, hollow or raised buttons, sleeve buttons, thimbles, coral sockets and bells, ferrils, pipelighters, cranes for bottles, very small book-clasps, any kind of stock or garter clasp jointed, very small nutmeg-graters, rims of snuff boxes of which the tops or bottoms are made of shell or stone, sliding-pencils, toothpick-cases, tweezer-cases, pencil-cases, needle-cases, any fli-gree-work, all sorts of tippings or swages on stone

or ivory cases, every kind of mount, screw, or stopper to stone or glass bottles or phials, any small or slight ornament put to amber or other eggs or urns, any wrought seal or seals with carnelian or other stones set therein; or any gold or silver vessel, plate, or manufacture of gold or silver so richly engraved, carved, or chased or set with jewels or other stones as not to admit of an assay to be taken of it, or a mark to be struck thereon, without damaging, prejudicing, or defacing the same; or such other things as by reason of the smallness or thinness thereof are not capable of receiving the marks before mentioned, or any of them, and not weighing 10 dwts. of gold each. The last-named articles include nearly the whole of jewellers' fancy work, such as brooches, pins, scarf-slides, ear-rings, studs, solitaires, &c., &c. And although all these articles are exempt from compulsory hall-marking, *they can be hall-marked* (when the pattern of the articles will allow of it) *at the will of the intending purchaser*. When, however, this is required, the articles enumerated are not *now* chargeable with the same duty as *formerly*, and are, therefore, not impressed with that stamp.

The Act of 24 George III., c. 53, of the year 1784, which imposed new duties upon gold and silver plate, also exempted the above articles from

compulsory hall-marking, with the exception of mourning rings, which were to continue on the same terms as provided by the former statute. The latter Act exempted all jewellers' work, both of gold and silver, in which jewels or other stones were set, as well as jointed night-ear-rings made of gold, springs for locket, &c.

Silver Articles.

The following articles manufactured of silver are exempt from compulsory hall-marking by the Act 30 George III., c. 31, s. 3 and 4, of the year 1790, namely: chains, necklets, necklet beads, locket, brooches, ear-rings, hollow studs, links, stamped medals, filigree work, shirt buckles, spouts to china, stone, and earthenware tea-pots, of any weight whatever; fancy rings and *plain hoop* rings under 5 dwts. each; tippings, swages, and fancy mounts weighing not more than 10 dwts. each of silver; and all other articles except those enumerated under the list of *compulsory hall-marked* articles and not weighing more than 5 dwts. each.

The most recent statute concerning exemptions is the 7 and 8 Victoria, c. 22, s. 11, of the year 1844. This Act not only exempted all those articles from the control of Goldsmiths' Hall which have already

been enumerated, but extended its operation to the following, viz. watch-rings, watch-keys, watch-hooks, ear-rings, necklaces, eye-glasses, gold spectacles, shirt-pins, studs, bracelets, bead ornaments, waist buckles, &c., &c.

CHAPTER VI.

Offences against Hall-marking Laws and their Penalties.

THE offences against the hall-marking laws are of two distinct classes, namely, those against the laws for maintaining the true standards, which are punishable as felonies or misdemeanours by fine and imprisonment; and those concerning the forgery of the dies and marks used at the various assay offices, to which pecuniary penalties are attached.

Probably the first attempt ever made to restrict goldsmiths' and silversmiths' work to a specific standard was by an Act in the reign of Henry III., clause 22, m. 6, A.D. 1238. But the first known statute law on the subject was that of 28 Edward I., stat. 3, c. 20, A.D. 1300, which prohibited the manufacture of wrought silver plate worse than standard, or gold of a certain touch—*touch of Paris*—under pain of imprisonment and ransom at the king's pleasure. This statute, together with some sub-

sequent ones which we shall presently refer to, do not appear to have been repealed by recent legislation upon the subject ; therefore, according to these Acts, any individual goldsmith or silversmith is still liable to be indicted for a misdemeanour, for making gold or silver wares worse as regards fineness than that provided by the statutes to which allusion has been made.

In the latter part of the eighteenth century a person was tried and found guilty for infringing the authorised standard. The defendant applied to the Court of Queen's Bench to stay execution, on the ground that the statute 28 Edward I. had been repealed by the passing of subsequent acts ; but the Court decided otherwise, and Lord Mansfield, in delivering judgment, referred to all the principal statutes from 28 Edward I. to 12 George II., and held that the new penalties which had been introduced from time to time were cumulative, and that the various acts which imposed them did not repeal any former statute.

Formerly it was a capital offence for any person to counterfeit, forge, or cast any mark or stamp used for marking gold or silver plate by the Company of Goldsmiths in London, or by the wardens or assistants at Chester, York, Exeter, Bristol, Norwich, or Newcastle-upon-Tyne, or by

any maker or worker of gold or silver plate, "who shall cast, forge, or counterfeit any stamp, mark, or impression in imitation of, or resemblance to, any of the marks used by the Companies aforesaid; and any person convicted of offending in any one of these particulars should be punished with death," 31 George II., c. 32, s. 15. This Act was, however, repealed by a subsequent one, 13 George III., c. 59, which substituted fourteen years' transportation in lieu of the death penalty.

By the 24 George III., c. 53, s. 16, 1784, which introduced the duty mark of the *king's head*, it was made felony, punishable with death, to forge that mark or any part of it. This penalty was re-enacted by the 55 George III., c. 143, and 55 George III., c. 185.

In the year 1798 a new mark was introduced to denote the gold standard of 18 carats, at that time authorised to be used by the 38 George III., c. 69, which declared the forgery of that mark to be a felony, and punishable with seven years' imprisonment.

This continued the state of the law in relation to the forging of the hall-marks up to the time of the passing of the Act 1 William IV., c. 66, when the punishment of death was abolished in all those cases in which it had been previously enacted or

imposed. This Act substituted transportation or imprisonment, except as regards the forgery of the duty-mark, which was still to be a capital offence ; but the statutes 4 and 5 Victoria, c. 56, 1841, did away with the punishment of death for the forgery of the duty-mark on gold and silver plate. Until that time the penalties under these statutes for the forgery of the principal marks were as follows :—

The forgery of the duty mark—Felony ; Death.

The forgery of any of the assay marks—Felony ;
14 years.

The forgery of the standard mark for 18 carats—
Felony ; 7 years.

The severity of these punishments, however, has by recent legislation been somewhat modified, more particularly by the Act 7 and 8 Victoria, c. 22, of the year 1844, which is the most recent statute relating to the subject. It must therefore be taken as the chief guide and authority in all cases of forgery of the various hall-marks at present in use by the several Halls in the United Kingdom, and also as regards the penalties incurred thereby. To this Act special attention will be hereafter directed. In the meantime we will just revert to some of the penalties to which gold and silver workers and dealers are liable under some of the earlier statutes, which will, no doubt, be interesting to the reader,

as well as add to the completeness of the present treatise.

Offences Punishable by Fines.

Making gold or silver wares worse than sterling, or selling gold or silver wares before they are hall-marked :—

- (1.) Imprisonment and ransom at the King's pleasure. 28 Edward I., c. 20, 1300.
- (2.) Double the value. 2 Henry VI., c. 14, 1423; 17 Edward IV., c. 1, 1477.
- (3.) The whole value. 18 Elizabeth, c. 15, 1576.

Selling, exchanging, or exposing for sale any gold or silver ware which is below the standard :—

£10, or, in default of payment, imprisonment with hard labour not exceeding six months or until payment. 12 George II., c. 26, 1739.

Selling, exchanging, or exposing for sale any gold or silver ware before it is duly marked :—

- (1.) £10, or, in default, imprisonment not exceeding six months or until payment. 12 George II., c. 26, 1739.
- (2.) The ware, or value, in the Birmingham and Sheffield districts, both of which have

local acts. 13 George III., c. 52, 1773;
5 George IV., c. 52, 1824.

Selling, exchanging, or exporting gold and silver plate without the duty mark :—

£50 and forfeiture of the goods. 24 George III.,
c. 53, clause 8, 1784.

Not sending to the Hall with each parcel of work a printed form, stating the day of sending, the name and place of abode, the number of articles, and the weight of each parcel, with all the several parts which compose such articles in each separate parcel :—

£5, or, in default, imprisonment with hard labour not exceeding three months, or until payment be made. 12 George II., c. 26, s. 9, 1739.

Making gold and silver wares without entering the name, place of abode, and private mark of the maker of the same, at the Hall where the marking is intended to take place, or using any other mark than the one so entered at the Hall :—

- (1.) £10 for London, Chester, Exeter, Bristol, Norwich, and Newcastle-upon-Tyne. 12 George II., c. 26, s. 21, 1739.
- (2.) £100 for Birmingham and Sheffield. 5 George IV., c. 52, s. 21, 1824; and 13 George III., c. 52, s. 13, 1773.

- (3.) Assay offices out of London previous to these Acts, double the value of the plate.

12 and 13 William III., c. 4, s. 7, 1700.

Concealment of iron or other base metal in any gold or silver ware in the Birmingham district, or in silver ware in the Sheffield district:—

The ware, or its value. 13 George III., c. 52, s. 9, 1773; and 5 George IV., c. 52, s. 16, 1824.

These penalties of course refer only to plate and other gold and silver articles that are compulsorily required to be hall-marked, *i.e.* they do not include any of those articles of exemption to which allusion has already been made in a previous chapter. The statutes just enumerated are not, however, the most important ones for the guidance of the goldsmiths' trade. As we have said, the Act 7 and 8 Victoria c. 22, of the year 1844, is the most recent one, and is as a matter of course the principal statute which is enforced in all cases of forgery of the dies or marks of the Goldsmiths' Company; and which further imposes penalties and punishments for making and dealing in spurious plate, or having any fraudulent wares in possession. To the details of this Act a separate space must be allotted, the infringements to which the various Halls or Goldsmiths' Companies are exposed claiming prior attention.

Offences against the Goldsmiths' Companies and
their Penalties.

Marking any gold or silver ware which is below
the legal standard :—

- (1.) Double the value of the ware. 2 Henry VI.,
c. 14, s. 3, 1423; and 17 Edward IV.,
c. 1, 1477.
- (2.) The value of the ware. 18 Elizabeth, c. 15,
s. 8, 1576; and 12 and 13 William III., c.
4, s. 6, 1700.
- (3.) £50 upon the company, double the value
on assayer. 12 and 13 William III., c. 4,
s. 6, 1700.
- (4.) £200 on assayer, in the Birmingham
district. 5 George IV., c. 52, s. 29, 1824.
- (5.) £200 on assayer, in the Sheffield district,
as regards silver. 13 George III., c. 52, s.
23, 1773.

If any assayer shall mark in the Birmingham
district any gold or silver, or in the Sheffield district
any silver, except in the presence of two wardens,
or mark it before it is assayed and found standard,
or discover any pattern, design, or invention of
any ware brought to be assayed, or suffer it to be
viewed by any person not necessarily employed in
the office :—

£200, dismissal, and incapable of acting as assayer again. 5 George IV., c. 52, s. 26, 1824; and 13 George III., c. 52, s. 19, 1773.

Accepting the office of treasurer and clerk by one person :—

£100. 5 George IV., c. 52, s. 12, 1824.

These penalties relate to the English Assay Offices; in Scotland they are much more severe, as indicated by the following particulars :—

Making, selling, exposing, exporting, or attempting to export out of Scotland any manufactured wares of gold and silver less in fineness than sterling :—

£100 for each piece of plate. 6 and 7 William IV., c. 69, s. 1, 1836.

Selling, exchanging, keeping for sale, exporting, or attempting to export any gold or silver plate or ware not marked with the proper marks assigned to Scotland :—

£100 for each piece of plate or ware, and also forfeiture of the plate or ware. 6 and 7 William IV., c. 69, s. 18, 1836.

In Ireland the penalties are similar to those enumerated in the Birmingham and Sheffield Acts, and in addition, at the Dublin Assay Office, two wardens and the assayer are always to be present

when any marking takes place. A penalty of £200 is imposed with dismissal from the office of any official who shall improperly mark any ware, or disclose the design or pattern of any article sent to be assayed.

CHAPTER VII.

The Taxation of Gold and Silver Wares.

A GREAT deal of attention has recently been devoted to the taxation of gold and silver wares by the numerous members of the jewellery trade who are so directly affected by it. We shall consider the matter as a part of the hall-marking question, because there are certain persons who believe that the removal of the duty is impossible without the entire abolition of the practice of hall-marking. Our present purpose will, therefore, be best served by regarding it in that form.

The interest manifested in the subject has been so real that it has resulted in an attempt being made by the legislature to remedy the grievance Mr. Gladstone's proposal, however, to abolish the silver duty by six annual instalments of threepence each touched only one part of it, and even that has not met with the approval of the traders whom it was directly intended to benefit. Moreover, we think that it was wrong in principle. To abolish

the duty on silver and leave that on gold untouched was manifestly unfair to the respectable class of goldworkers, who have an equal right to demand the same privileges at the hands of Parliament as the silver-plate workers, the proposal having something of a tendency to relieve one class of workers from the obnoxious tax to the disadvantage of the other, who would naturally become more clamorous to have the burden finally and irrevocably swept away from all manufactured articles made of the precious metals.

But the silver-plate workers themselves considered that this proposal of Parliament would be highly unsatisfactory to both masters and men, and subversive of the best interests of an already very depressed state of the trade, at least for the next six or seven years, while the tax lasted, under the arrangement suggested. It did not, therefore, meet with the support from the silver-plate trade that was expected by the framers of the scheme, for Mr. Gladstone a few days after its introduction in Parliament announced his intention of withdrawing it; and so the matter still remains in abeyance, awaiting circumstances of a more favourable character before it is taken up again.

Having said thus much in explanation of the Government proposal, we shall now enter into the

general details of the whole subject. And the first question that presents itself to our mind is this: Should the duty be allowed to remain or not? For our own part we would sweep it away at once, as we consider it subversive to both art workmanship and true progress. There are, however, a few advocates for the retention of the tax, and they do so because they make an annual income out of the drawback allowed to manufacturers for unfinished work at the time of marking, that being the stage when the duty is paid on the work. This drawback amounts to about threepence per ounce, and as the purchasers are charged to the full extent of the duty, one shilling and sixpence, it allows of a profit being made of, say, from twopence to threepence per ounce, by finishing the work as nearly as possible before sending it to the Hall to be assayed and marked.

One of the most urgent reasons to our minds why the tax should not be allowed to remain on gold and silver wares any longer is, that it was originally levied for war purposes, or rather for helping to discharge the expenses incurred during a time of war. The duty upon silver plate was first originated in the year 1719 to assist in the reduction of the National Debt, which had considerably increased by the cost of the Spanish War,

and it was proposed to reduce those expenses principally by taxing the British silversmiths' industry. By the method in which this was made to apply to the trade it soon proved very depressive to it even at that time, and in 1758 it was repealed, the principal reason assigned being "for the encouragement of trade." It was, however, imposed again in 1784, this time to help to pay for the American War. The tax was soon afterwards increased, and again, in the years 1804 and 1815, it being in all cases imposed for war purposes; the French War, which was being carried on about the last-named period, having cost £601,500,343—an enormous addition to the National Debt.

To the makers of heavy silver goods paying duty its retention may prove a source of profit, by charging the public the full duty of one shilling and sixpence per ounce upon all their purchases and pocketing the usual allowance for drawback. Therefore we may expect a few persons (and, perhaps, very naturally) advocating in favour of things remaining as they are.

We have said that with regard to manufacturers of *special and heavy goods* doubtless a profit of some magnitude may be made out of the tax where a considerable trade is annually carried on. But why should the few reap advantage by it to the

injury of the many? The makers of *light and fancy goods* (who have to pay the tax) cannot possibly make any such profit by the means just indicated, the time occupied by the workman in finishing such work, which is much more defaced in the marking than the heavy and solid kinds, under the system of *compulsory hall-marking* more than absorbing the value of the drawback allowed, so that instead of a gain there is an *actual loss*. Assuming, then, that the duty or tax is a net gain to a few manufacturers, it is a disadvantage and an injury to a great many others, who would like to see its entire abolition, as it operates unjustly to them, not only pecuniarily but also in other ways. In the first place it so enhances the selling price of an article as almost to forbid its sale. This is seen readily enough by taking any small article of jewellery and comparing it with one of the same weight and style of workmanship that has paid duty on the manufacture. We have simply to point out the fact that the former, while equal to the latter in every way, can be purchased at from 20 to 40 per cent. less, an unusually large margin of difference in the cost of an article when contending with dull times, such as have lately been experienced in the various branches of the jewellery trade for a considerable period.

Then, again, the retention of the duty for the advantage of the comparatively few as against the interests of great numbers is really and absolutely bad in principle; in effect it fosters a tax upon knowledge; it inflicts an injustice upon the precious metal trades by harassing its members; it crushes skilled enterprise in the production of artistic work in the manufacture of plate (which is now the principal thing that is taxed); and *especially*, it keeps old patterns and designs in the market which are best calculated to stand the cumbersome system of marking now in vogue at the assay halls, to the exclusion of more showy and tastefully designed work. Such obstacles to the gold and silver plate trade tend to discourage a taste for design as well as hinder business enterprise, having a tendency to lessen the demand for choice articles; and so manufacturers' stocks move but slowly in consequence of there being too much sameness of design, a matter which our present system of compulsory hall-marking every article of plate, as well as some others, has every tendency to perpetuate.

The system of compulsory hall-marking in England, to which all duty-paying articles are subject, is so crude and partial in its application that it has in a manner prevented the production of artistic

designs so as to keep pace with the times as regards style and taste; it has, therefore, as it were, hampered the English silver trade, and promoted the advancement of foreign trade in place of our own. A very good proof in support of this is to be found in the gradual decrease in the number of ounces upon which the duty has of late years been paid, and upon which drawback has been allowed for exportation. The statistics below show a remarkable and continuous diminution in the weight of silver on which duty has been paid.

During the period of the five years between 1855—9 the decrease was 192,500 ozs., being as follows:—

1855	.	.	.	.	994,360 ounces.
1859	.	.	.	.	801,860 „

and the weight on which drawback was allowed showed a decrease of 40,294 ozs. during the same period. It was as follows:—

1855	.	.	.	.	156,440 ounces.
1859	.	.	.	.	116,146 „

During the period of five years corresponding from 1875—9, there was a decrease in the weight of silver of 140,254 ozs. upon which duty was paid:—

1875	.	.	.	.	880,493 ounces.
1879	.	.	.	.	740,239 „

In the same period the weight in which the drawback was allowed decreased 35,159 ozs. The amounts being—

1875	.	.	.	.	120,280 ounces.
1879	.	.	.	.	85,121 „

And last year the weight on which duty was paid showed a still further decrease of 101,619 ozs. from the former year 1879. The numbers being—

1880	638,620 ounces.
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These figures show a rapid decline both in the manufacture and export of silver plate, and it is more than obvious that this decline must still continue year by year as time rolls on unless the existing restrictions are removed.

As a further proof of the injury which this tax does to the silver trade we may mention the enormous increase in the manufacture of silver chains, lockets, and bracelets since it was removed about two years ago. Before the duty was taken off these articles there was comparatively no demand for them, and their manufacture was not carried on to any extent worth speaking of, the demand being for articles of a character which were not hall-marked, and which in consequence avoided the duty. Not that the public had any objection to hall-marked work, but the majority preferred the

risk of having a little inferior metal in their wares to paying so much above the nominal value of the article they were purchasing in the shape of a heavy tax. However, now that the duty has been wisely taken off, an enormous demand has sprung up for these articles with the hall mark upon them, clearly showing that it was the duty *alone* that proved such a hindrance to their former manufacture, the considerably enhanced price formerly put upon them being a great obstacle to their production. Moreover, besides the great hindrance to the trade which the imposition of the duty must and does inflict, the amount paid annually to the Exchequer on account of it is so small in comparison that it is a wonder it has been considered worth keeping up. The silver duties have long been condemned, not only by those connected with the gold and silver trades, but almost unanimously by a Select Committee of the House of Commons; and while a tax thus so strongly and almost universally condemned still exists it acts very seriously against any branch of industry, inasmuch as manufacturers refuse to make for stock articles thus heavily burdened so long as there is a doubt as to the tax upon them being long continued or not. We consider, then, that the duty interferes with and paralyzes trade, and that where stocks are kept it

encourages an indisposition to replace articles which have been sold, and so prevents workmen from having employment.

To show the remarkable decrease in the manufacture of silver plate we may mention that the amount paid for duty the last two years was as follows :—

In the year 1879 it produced	£88,620
„ 1880 „	69,078
Showing a decrease of	<u>£19,542</u>

This amount for one year represents a decline in the silver-plate trade during the same period, of upwards of 310,000 ozs., and this retrograde tendency will continue unless the duty is at once abolished.

It may, however, be argued, on the other hand, that probably a few manufacturers having become disgusted with the production of articles of this class, have given up the trade altogether and placed their resources to better advantage, and in that way they may endeavour to account for the extraordinary decrease which is so palpable from the figures we have quoted. But let us refer for a moment to the number of plate licenses annually taken out in order if possible to ascertain how far this is confirmed by facts. Of course it is well understood by every one that before any gold or

silver ware can be sold it is absolutely necessary for the vendor or maker to take out a *Plate License*, to be renewed annually, except by those who deal in wares under 2 dwts. for gold and 4 dwts. for silver, this class being entirely exempt from the licensing laws. In the two years corresponding with those wherein the amount of the tax is stated, we find the number of licenses taken out were for the following amounts :—

1879	£43,071
1880	43,073
Increase	<u>£2</u>

The aggregate number of licenses appears, then, to remain stationary, so that if a portion of the silver-plate manufacturers have given up their trade other persons have embarked in the manufacture of those wares which are free and unfettered by the duty on silver goods. This says very little in favour of the retention of this obnoxious and unjust tax on British industry. It is further assumed that the tax this year (1880-1) will not yield £60,000, an amount so small in itself that we should think that the revenue may readily dispense with it altogether.

The importance of this matter must be still further urged upon the Government, for it is

manifestly unfair to the precious metal workers that their handicraft should be subject to excessive taxation while similar manufactures are free. The electro-plate trade, in which some thousands of ounces of silver are annually employed, and with which the silver-plate trade has now to compete, is not only free as regards the duty, but is allowed to assume marks of a character and description closely resembling those put upon silver plate as the genuine hall marks. The hieroglyphics are so nearly alike as to be incapable of detection at arm's length. All this has a tendency to retard the progress of the solid silver trade in the manufacture of similar articles. We shall always, no doubt, find a few who will advocate the old ways and old things, no matter what they may be. Partly on this ground we must make some allowance for those who now uphold the duty, because it puts a little of it into their own pockets, and, moreover, they cannot yet see a way of making it up if this tax should disappear. But we may remind them that it is just possible that their annual turn-over might be doubled if such a thing should happen; and where a business is properly managed this increase of trade would bring along with it its proportionate increase of profit, which we should think would be a far more agreeable matter

than the miserable allowance derived from this impost.

Some surprise has been expressed that Mr. Gladstone did not include the duty on gold wares in his proposed measure lately submitted to Parliament, but the fact was that there existed some diversity of opinion on the matter, as is so often the case in legislating for trade grievances. With the exception of gold plate, wedding rings are now almost the only gold articles that pay duty. Private meetings of the manufacturers of these articles were held, when some of them pointed out that if the duty were abolished their trade would be ruined. But that was only one side of the question, for on the other hand the whole of the jewellery trade would have been greatly benefited by its entire removal, for they would then have had the option of making wedding rings in conjunction with all those articles which were comprised in their own special business. And this was just what the small section of the trade known as wedding-ring makers were afraid of: "Every jeweller will make wedding rings," said they, "and if this duty is removed, they will be run in with the other work." Now why should not the trade generally make wedding rings, if they are profitable to them, as well as other things. The general

jeweller's trade, of late years especially, has been one of skill and novelty, but the wedding-ring trade is one of entire uniformity ; consequently, while the wedding-ring makers have had no opposition to face as regards style and design—leaving out of the question long credits—the general jeweller has had all these to encounter in the course of his business. Then, we ask, apart from all other considerations, why should one section of the trade enjoy a monopoly such as this tax imposes, to the disadvantage of all the others ? So far as the wedding-ring makers are concerned, if this tax should be abolished—and we have no fear as to its ultimate destiny—they will have to shift for themselves in the same manner as some manufacturers have had to do in other branches of the trade. In short, they will have to take up some other department in conjunction with the rest, and then their trade will develop into one of skill, that is, they will have to design and make suitable articles, and at prices that will meet the exigencies of the trade as well as please the public taste.

Having thus briefly alluded to some of the hardships which the duty imposes upon the gold and silver trades, we will next consider the question of licenses, which is one that affects the whole of the jewellery trade and those fancy trades which deal

in manufactures composed of the precious metals. Every person making, dealing, or offering for sale gold or silver wares—no matter what the quality may be—is compelled to procure a license (which is entirely separate and independent of the duty tax) before he can carry on his business. It will therefore be apparent that this industry is doubly taxed, and in this respect it stands quite alone, for no other handicraft is so fettered and burdened. This is a question on which the whole trade could join, as they are all greatly affected by it, save and except those who sell or manufacture heavy wares (in which case the license is higher) and those who sell or manufacture articles within a specified weight, who are exempted from taking out a license. The regulations are as follows :—

GOLD wares under 2 dwts. . . .				exempted.
"	"	"	2 ozs. . . .	£2 6 0
"	"	"	of any weight . . .	5 15 0
SILVER wares under 4 dwts. . . .				exempted.
"	"	"	30 ozs. . . .	£2 6 0
"	"	"	of any weight. . .	5 15 0

These licenses have to be renewed annually, and must expire on the 6th day of July in each year. There are, besides, distinctions made in connection with them affecting the general class of gold and silver workers. We have three grades, both as regards gold and silver: there are those who can

trade without any license whatever, those who can trade with a £2 6s. license, and those who cannot trade without the higher license of £5 15s. This inequality is very unsatisfactory, and in a manufacturing trade it is sometimes most difficult to avoid infringing the law, unless the higher license is periodically taken out, especially when nineteen-twentieths of the business is done under the limit of the £2 6s. license.

In our opinion the licenses should one and all go with the duty, that is, be entirely swept away, and the trade be left perfectly free, the same as other manufacturing interests; for while the gold and silver trades are crippled by these taxes, their kindred pursuits do not contribute one iota towards the revenue of the country. The electro-plate and gilt-metal trades fabricate the same kind of articles, to the injury of the goldsmith and silversmith. They work up annually some thousands of ounces, both of gold and silver, in finishing the surface of their goods, and yet they are not taxed like other gold-workers, being, in fact, absolutely free and unfettered.

Further, we believe that the licensing system does not affect all alike, for there are at the present time a great many dealers in fancy wares who also sell gold and silver articles without taking out a

license. This, again, is unfair to the small country shopkeeper, who sells only a limited number of wares, perhaps barely sufficient to pay for the license which he has taken out, while his neighbour does a better trade, possibly because not having taken out a license, he is enabled to sell a little cheaper, and thus command, though illegally, a larger sale for his goods.

It is, no doubt, a very difficult matter to reach all these people, but with manufacturers the case is different, for they are easily detected if they endeavour to evade the law. And if the existing law which has led to these observations cannot be repealed, by all means let it be assimilated so that we may have one uniform scale, bearing upon all traders alike, where either of the precious metals is employed.

CHAPTER VIII.

Hall-Marking practically considered.

THE question of compulsory hall-marking will in all probability receive additional attention now that the vexed question of the duty has been so prominently brought forward. It has been said that the abandonment of the duty would also do away with the hall-marking system, and that the result would be the flooding of the country with wares unworthy of the name of the precious metals. This opinion is, we think, more theoretical than practical, and manifests a great want of that knowledge of the system which is essential to a proper understanding of it. The removal of the duty need in no way whatever interfere with the hall-marking of gold and silver articles.

Hall-marking has been practised for more than five hundred and eighty years, and was instituted long before the duty was enacted. It dates as far back as the year 1300, whilst the duty has existed

from the year 1719; the latter, therefore, was imposed four hundred and nineteen years subsequent to the system of hall-marking; it also continued during the period between 1758 and 1784, at which time the duty was temporarily removed. The buyers of gold and silver wares need not be under the slightest apprehension as regards the abandonment of the hall mark, beyond the removal of one of the cabalistic characters from the present set of *hall marks*; namely, the Queen's head, which now represents the payment of the duty. This argument, then, like a great many others connected with this subject, is an unwarrantable assumption, and based upon an imperfect knowledge of the facts connected with the English hall-marking system. It is true the duty question is closely interwoven with the hall-marking system, as it brings into force the compulsory powers of our laws relating to this matter, but that is the only point where the two can be made a part of the same question.

It is compulsory that all duty-paying articles shall be hall-marked; the one cannot at present be separated from the other, and this is precisely what the trade and its adherents are seeking to reform. We think few people will object to hall-marking pure and simple, but it must be without the payment of duty on wares submitted to that process

to be at all satisfactory to our present requirements.

At the present time we have compulsory hall-marking and voluntary hall-marking, and the question is, which of these two the trade and those affected by it will in the future prefer. There is something to be said in favour of both systems when the matter is brought to bear upon special articles. For instance, there is the manufacture of watch-cases, which in this country *must* be hall-marked. Whether this regulation is to be continued in the future requires calm consideration and a practical insight into the business ; it is not to be decided off-hand. There is this much to be said in its favour, that compulsory powers to mark tend to keep up the standard quality of the cases themselves, whilst it also prevents unscrupulous people from putting inferior cases to their work, which can have but one tendency, and that is, a lowering eventually of the quality of the movements in point of workmanship as well as superiority of finish, which things are all in all to a watch in so far as its time-keeping qualities are concerned.

Another point of some importance to the English watch-case trade is that the compulsory hall-marking of them shuts out the home market from American manufactures. Whether this is an advantage

or not to the English workman is not yet decided by those engaged in it; but this much is an established fact, that it is impossible for the English manufacturer to take a colonial order for watch-cases other than hall-marked ones on account of the compulsory enactment of our existing law, which will not permit of the work being done in this country without being hall-marked. Consequently many orders have to be refused, but whether the English artisans have the best of this arrangement is an open question, and one that is certain to come to the front for practical discussion, and that too in the immediate future. For it is not always that watch-cases are ordered to be hall-marked, some buyers preferring them otherwise when the quality can be depended upon; and under such circumstances the English case-makers cannot be competitors for the work in consequence of our system which necessitates the hall-marking of every case made in England.

The hall mark on a watch-case is a guarantee of the standard quality to a certain degree, but is not an absolute one. There is so much solder run in under the rims of some of them, and other inferior metal employed in the connecting of them together, that watch-cases actually put into the melting-pot and melted down do not assay at more than from

three shillings and tenpence to four shillings per ounce, being equivalent to from 16 dwts. 12 grs. to 17 dwts. of fine silver per ounce, instead of 18 dwts. 12 grs., which is the hall-marking standard. Any one who has had anything to do with the melting and assaying of old watch-cases for re-manufacture can bear out these observations. In the United States they have no *hall mark*, but this has not prevented their manufacturers from making *their mark* after a certain fashion all over the world. But the fact is, manufacturers should care more for their reputation than for the trifling gain to be obtained through the selling of an article of inferior quality which a slight deviation from the standard might bring to them.

There are comparatively few persons outside the jewellery and watch trades that know the hall marks when they see them. They are so fantastically varied in their character that to most persons they are positively confusing and misleading, especially as many of them are more or less spurious imitations of the genuine marks; these being allowed to be put upon the various manufactures by the makers or other interested persons, and in some cases they have been found to be positively fraudulent.

We are not arguing against the continuance or

maintenance of the British hall mark, but rather against the form it takes with regard to the punches employed and its compulsory application to certain wares already specified in these pages. What we advocate is, by all means let us have a hall mark to be applied when necessary or when desired, but let it be a simple and intelligent one, easy of recognition by the public, and applicable to the work in hand. Make the hall mark uniform in its representations, so that it may be universally acknowledged as a purely British mark for the sole use and benefit of British artisans; but let its employment be voluntary, the law as regards its infringement more stringent, and all foreign-made goods prohibited from bearing a similar impress. Let the mark be purely and essentially the acknowledged hall mark of Great Britain; this would be a notification to all the world as to the standard quality, as well as being of British manufacture, in regard to any article bearing its impress.

The mark should be the same for England, Scotland, and Ireland to make it a purely representative one, and the punches reduced in number and made uniform at all the assay halls in the United Kingdom. We now have the different punches of the *leopard's head* for London, the *anchor* for Birmingham, the *dagger between three wheatsheaves* for

Chester, the *crown* for Sheffield, the *castle with three towers* for Exeter, the *three castles* for Newcastle-upon-Tyne, the *castle* for Edinburgh, the *tree, bell, and fish* for Glasgow, and the figure of *Hibernia* for Dublin. All these are so numerous and confusing as to be very difficult of identification even by those well acquainted with the matter. How, then, must it be with the purchasers of jewellery who know but little about it, and who constitute the great majority of those immediately interested in it? What is wanted is some simple and intelligent mark that cannot possibly be mistaken either by makers or dealers or by purchasers; and this cannot be better accomplished than by having one mark, to be known as "the hall mark," at all the assay offices in the United Kingdom. We are not, however, advocates for compulsory hall-marking in any form, much preferring the voluntary system as it now applies to the lower qualities of gold jewellery.

To do away with the hall mark altogether would be taking away that guarantee which is now so much relied on abroad by a certain class of purchasers; for it should be borne in mind that it is not so much in the sale of jewellery at home as abroad that the hall mark does such signal service, as in the latter case there is nothing specific in

proof of the genuineness of an article save the English hall mark. We cannot see the necessity for the compulsory hall-marking of a few special articles while the great majority of the wares that are made are absolutely exempted from, not only the compulsory provisions of the law as regards similar manufactures, but also from any test-marking whatever. It is a well-known fact that the English hall mark is much valued abroad, where it is received as a certificate of quality wherever it goes, without question, in fact, just as readily as the impress of the Queen's head upon our gold and silver coins is acknowledged as evidence of its being British money. But the English system of hall-marking can only be applied to articles of gold and silver that are plain and solid in construction, and not to wares that are light or hollow in make or artistic in design, and this because anything that required intricate or delicate workmanship would become so defaced by the process of marking as to be wholly unfit for sale afterwards. To make the law, therefore, compulsory in regard to all articles alike would be utterly impossible with the present system adopted of affixing the marks to the work; but to allow the vast majority of manufactured gold and silver wares to go unmarked because they are not adapted to the method of marking, but

which are, nevertheless, allowed to assume certain marks closely resembling the authorised ones without their legal liability, is rendering the genuine hall mark of little value to the public, because it is so closely imitated by the stamping of the same numerals as to utterly deceive ordinary buyers.

Under the present compulsory system which affects a certain class of work and allows another class to assume marks somewhat resembling the genuine hall marks in so far as they indicate the quality of the work, we have no definite and comprehensive *British mark* by means of which the inexperienced could readily distinguish the real from the false.

What is wanted, to our mind, is some simple process of voluntary hall-marking applicable, if necessary, to all the manufactures in gold and silver. In this way there could be no deception, for the purchaser could then order from the manufacturer hall-marked work or otherwise at his option, and pay for it accordingly. The work not hall-marked could be accompanied by some sort of guarantee as to quality, for which purpose the invoice charging the goods and stating the quality upon it should be considered sufficient. But then it may be said that this is all very well in regard to the first transaction or purchase from the manufacturer, and that when articles pass through many

hands in the ordinary course of business this plan might be rendered futile by the selling of inferior standard qualities for the better ones. We think, however, this could be remedied by placing a specific quality mark upon the work by the manufacturer, in a similar manner but quite distinct from the Government mark. Let the law which now prescribes the fixed standards also provide for the marking of *all* wares, either by experts who are not interested in the work or by the manufacturer himself, to indicate the fineness of the metal of which they are composed, under pain of severe penalties for all violations of the law. This would soon prevent the imposition upon the public of inferior or base metal for the genuine or standard degrees of fineness.

The hall mark which is now put upon the standards and recognised by law is a matter perfectly separate from, and independent of, the manufacturing interest. The work is (as most people know) tested, and the marks stamped on it by persons who are in no way connected with the manufacture of the articles that come before them. The maker of the various kinds of goods required to be hall-marked has no power to place the mark upon his wares; he has to send them to the officials authorised by the law to do it, and they are either

returned duly stamped with the proper symbol or hieroglyphics in indication of their true quality, or, if otherwise, they are returned defaced, having been broken up in consequence of their being below the fineness required. This is one of the greatest evils of our present English hall-marking system—the defacing of the work—for if found only a quarter of a grain under the specific standard it is entirely defaced or broken up, and is thus rendered only fit for the melting-pot. Now what possible difference could so small a deviation from the true standard make to the purchaser, or even to any one interested at all in the matter? In gold it represents about a halfpenny per ounce; in silver about the eighth of a farthing only. In any new arrangement concerning the hall-marking system this matter will have to be taken into serious and practical consideration, with a view to the better adjustment of it, and for the advantage of all parties concerned. By the strictness with which the cutting and defacing is now carried on by the various guilds, it is in many cases a serious loss to the manufacturer.

The numerals which are always put on English hall-marked work are also put on other things which are not hall-marked, and so many persons are often taken in with goods marked with some of these numerals, such as 18, 15, 12, 9, &c. (which

figures purport to represent those qualities respectively in fine gold), if they do not look for the other hieroglyphics, which are specially intended as safeguards for the protection of the too-confiding British public. What is required in the future, and what we should much like to see, is the abolition of some of these cabalistic signs, and a *distinctive Government stamp* substituted in their place, to be impressed upon all wares at the option of the intending purchaser; the stamp to be the same for all places, significant in its import, and its detection simple and plain, so that it could be easily understood by all persons.

The present English hall marks are so varied and representative in character as to render them confusing and difficult of explanation. To purchasers abroad, where American goods are in demand, the English hall marks render very little service in the hands of a non-expert, for some of the American goods bear close imitations of our hall marks, which can only act greatly to the detriment of our manufactures abroad. These goods in many instances are nothing more than base metal cased with gold, and bearing such of our stamps as are considered of the highest importance by members of the English trade. The ones most commonly imitated are the *lion*, the *crown*,

and the *anchor*, with the quality numerals impressed by the side of them in the same manner as on English hall-marked work, and which are authorised by English law.

Besides these drawbacks, which cannot but be injurious to our trade, there is another exception which we take to the system of hall-marking in this country, and that is the manner of testing, as well as the way in which the marking is done, and which gives rise to much annoyance to manufacturers. The system now in vogue of scraping and cutting the work is very unsatisfactory, practically speaking, inasmuch as it not only necessitates part of it being done over again, but to some extent destroys the true form and symmetry of the parts which are left, more especially when more than one assay has to be effected in ascertaining the correct fineness of the material under trial. In the case of a locket, the various parts are all required to be tested and marked, and to do this it is necessary to cut out a portion of the material of one part to supply the substance to work upon; the other pieces may be scraped to provide the other portion, and the parts that have been scraped may be finished when the stamps have been struck upon them; but that which has been cut is rendered perfectly useless, and a new part has to be made in

its place before the locket can be finished ready for sale. This causes no little annoyance, not only to the master, but also the workman who originally made the article. Besides, what proof have the public that these additions to hall-marked wares so cut and defaced, are of the same fineness as the originally prepared parts which were destroyed in the process of hall-marking.

These remarks apply not only to lockets, but to all wares which are cut and disfigured in the process of striking the hall marks ; but in justice to the authorities at the halls we must state that the system has of late years slightly improved, for it is not quite so destructive as formerly. They manage these things better in France. There the work is not, as a general rule, tested by fire after the manner of our assays, but by the acid test, and it has always given satisfaction. No cutting or scraping is required by such a method ; merely a few bottles of acid, the touchstone, and a set of test needles, are all that their system requires. Moreover, the work is not tested in the unfinished state like ours, but in the last stage of manufacture, and it may even be done on the way to the purchaser's by calling at the Control Office for that purpose. The process is so simple and the means so accessible that it presents very little difficulty, and is

not much different from ordinary business experience. The punches are few in number, and are so small as not to disfigure the work in its finished state when they are skilfully used. The laws relating to fraud and any infringement of the regulations are, however, much more severe than our own, being nothing less, we believe, than ten years' imprisonment for the slightest offence connected with fraudulent marking.

There are some business men who think that the legislative restrictions bearing upon the subject we are treating of are unnecessary; that any interference with the freedom of manufacture is injurious to trade; and that it is essentially necessary to a complete and full development of the various branches of the gold and silver trades that the principle of non-interference by the Parliament of the nation in the general manufactures of the country should be applied to these trades also. This principle is, we think, a sound one in many respects. We are not, however, quite prepared to go to such extremes, or to adopt such a wholesale condemnation of the hall-marking laws which our legislature has provided for the protection of those buyers of jewellery who choose to avail themselves of them; so that we cannot entirely fall in with this view of the question. Hall-mark-

ing would be all very well if it could be simplified and rendered more accessible to all classes and for all kinds of work manufactured from the precious metals. It is impossible to tell from the appearance of articles made of gold and silver in their finished state whether they are standard or not, on account of the artificial surface which most of them bear. In this respect nothing could be easier than to pass off spurious articles—or at least those of a far inferior quality to that represented—as genuine or of superior quality, if it were not for the protection the hall marks are supposed to afford to the uninitiated or non-experts in jewellery transactions.

We would permit the manufacture of gold and silver wares in all their various qualities, that is, allowing an increased number of legal standards, from 1-carat gold and upwards, at the will of the intending purchaser, with a system of *optional hall-marking* provided by law for all standards alike. This would give any distrustful person absolute security, by enabling him to purchase any carat quality with its fineness indicated by a Government stamp; whilst it would give the manufacturing goldsmiths and silversmiths freedom to alloy their gold or silver in any manner which practical experience might teach them was best suited to

the various articles they produced or to the tastes of their customers. They could then manufacture articles of various tints and with other effects, all of which are to be obtained by a skilful mixing of the different kinds of alloy.

We have said that we would permit the hall-marking of every quality when required, but we would make the marking voluntary, so as to secure perfect freedom in the manufacture. By this means we should have ample security for the public as regards their purchases, and free trade in the manufacture. The Government stamp should be applied by experts under Government control, and Goldsmiths' Hall abolished. We would have one executive to manage all the assay offices in the United Kingdom, that is, the assaying and marking should be subject to its will and control in all matters affecting the proceedings. The existing assay offices should be abolished where it is found that there is not sufficient assaying and marking being done to make the concern remunerative, or they should be removed to some more convenient town where an increased business could be done; and further, the marks or signs of quality now in use should be swept away so far as they indicate the different halls and dates, together with the other cabalistic signs now separately impressed.

We would like the duty mark also done away with by the final abolition of the duty upon all manufactures.

Moreover, we would advise the abolition of Goldsmiths' Hall and all the other subordinate guilds and corporations connected with hall-marking in the United Kingdom, and have an establishment in their place composed of experienced officials entirely under the direction of one efficient organization provided by the British Government, as we have said before, who would provide workshops in the different towns where the assaying and marking could be properly and effectually carried out. As a matter of economy the same officers might be employed, and the same assay halls might be utilised as far as practicable under the scheme here suggested. As we have already observed, we consider the present marks incomprehensible to the majority of persons, even to those having an intimate acquaintance with gold and silver manufactures; much more, then, to such as are unacquainted with the double system of marking such as is now practised, namely the marks of the assay halls and those of the manufacturers, which are sometimes called private marks, and which are undistinguishable in the hands of persons not possessed of much knowledge respect-

ing the various kinds which are now applied to gold and silver jewellery. To remedy this we would advise one symbol or character to be employed as a *Government or hall mark*, and to be used alike in all the branch establishments for the purpose under discussion, simple in design, and to be readily distinguished from any other mark. Let it be one emblematic of Great Britain, and recognisable by almost the most uninformed person in the land.

Such a mark we believe could be found in the *Royal Coat of Arms*, removing the centre figures, the year of marking being substituted in their place; for instance, in the oval centre the figures 1882 could, as the representative of the present year, be readily inserted, and the quality mark or number of carats might be put in above. This would at once make a hall mark difficult of imitation, and answering all the purposes of the ones now in use. The *Imperial Crown* would make another good representative Government mark, of which a mere outline need only be impressed. In the centre of the crown there would be space enough for the quality figures, which could be indicated by the numerals 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, or by those which indicate the quality under the present system, viz. 22, 18, 15, 12, 9, &c. The bottom lines

of the crown would form an admirable space for the date figures 1882. Again, the *Queen's Head* would form a suitable mark, significant in itself, well known, and very appropriate to the object in view. In this case, as in the two former ones, the quality and year of marking could be easily impressed upon some portion of the neck or under the chin of the representative figure. By carrying out these or similar suggestions, the marks would be reduced to two, viz. the *maker's mark* and the *hall mark*, and these would represent all the other marks which are now struck upon watch-cases, jewellery, and plate; they would, moreover, be far more simple to understand, and render the mark, as it were, a purely British institution. If it were found altogether impracticable to engrave all this upon one punch on account of its smallness, such as might be required for some kinds of work, then the quality numerals could easily be impressed by the side of the hall mark by means of a separate punch. We should then have only three marks instead of four, five, or six, as is sometimes the case under the present system.

With regard to the remedy now allowed by law of less than a quarter grain, we would have that increased to five parts of a thousand for gold, and eight parts of a thousand for silver. This would

represent a remedy of thirty grains per pound for gold, and forty grains per pound for silver. And when we take into consideration the fact that the gold and silver purchased from the bullion dealers for commercial purposes is never absolutely fine, *i.e.* pure, it is not too large a remedy to allow in the manufacture of jewellery. Gold used for the purposes of commerce generally contains about twenty-four grains per pound of impurity, and silver is sometimes found by the test of accurate assays to contain a little more. This impurity has to be allowed for in manufacturers' alloys, and is therefore a source of loss to them from a monetary point of view. The remedy here suggested would cover that impurity, which has now to be allowed for, and would not make the slightest difference to the purchasing public. But it would probably go a long way towards rectifying the evil we have so much complained of, namely the defacing of the work, by allowing a sufficient margin in connection with the legal standard, so as to render the passing of the work through the hall absolutely certain and safe.

CHAPTER IX.

Alloys for Hall-Marking.

THE following are the gold and silver alloys which are allowed in the United Kingdom under the provisions of the existing hall-marking laws, and are therefore the legally established and recognised standards of Great Britain. Gold, such as is purchased for alloying, is never absolutely pure; a little allowance has therefore to be made in the mixing of alloys to insure safety at the hall. This is best effected by the addition of a few grains of fine gold, say two grains to the ounce of the prepared mixture, as shown in the following examples.

Gold.

22-carat alloy for hall-marking. Cost £3 19s. per oz.

No. 1.				oz. dwts. grs.		
Fine Gold	.	.	.	0	18	8
Fine Silver	.	.	.	0	1	0
Refined Copper	.	.	.	0	0	16
				1	0	0

22-carat with the addition of fine gold.

No. 2.

	oz.	dwts.	grs.
Fine Gold	0	18	10
Fine Silver	0	1	0
Refined Copper	0	0	14
	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>

22-carat for hall-marking.

No. 3.

	oz.	dwts.	grs.
Fine Gold	1	0	0
Fine Silver	0	1	0
Refined Copper	0	0	18
	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>18</u>

20-carat alloy for hall-marking. Cost £3 12s. per oz.

No. 1.

	oz.	dwts.	grs.
Fine Gold	0	16	16
Fine Silver	0	1	12
Refined Copper	0	1	20
	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>

20-carat with the addition of fine gold.

No. 2.

	oz.	dwts.	grs.
Fine Gold	0	16	18
Fine Silver	0	1	12
Refined Copper	0	1	18
	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>

20-carat for hall-marking.

No. 3.

	oz.	dwts.	grs.
Fine Gold	1	0	0
Fine Silver	0	1	18
Refined Copper	0	2	6
	1	4	0

18-carat alloy for hall-marking. Cost £3 5s. per oz.

No. 1.

	oz.	dwts.	grs.
Fine Gold	0	15	0
Fine Silver	0	2	12
Refined Copper	0	2	12
	1	0	0

18-carat with the addition of fine gold.

No. 2.

	oz.	dwts.	grs.
Fine Gold	0	15	2
Fine Silver	0	2	12
Refined Copper	0	2	10
	1	0	0

18-carat for hall-marking.

No. 3.

	oz.	dwts.	grs.
Fine Gold	1	0	0
Fine Silver	0	3	8
Refined Copper	0	3	8
	1	6	16

15-carat alloy for hall-marking. Cost £2 14s. 6d.
per oz.

No. 1.					oz. dwts. grs.		
Fine Gold	.	.	.	.	0	12	12
Fine Silver	.	.	.	.	0	2	12
Refined Copper	.	.	.	.	0	5	0
					1	0	0

15-carat with the addition of fine gold.

No. 2.					oz. dwts. grs.		
Fine Gold	.	.	.	.	0	12	14
Fine Silver	.	.	.	.	0	2	12
Refined Copper	.	.	.	.	0	4	22
					1	0	0

15-carat for hall-marking.

No. 3.					oz. dwts. grs.		
Fine Gold	.	.	.	.	1	0	0
Fine Silver	.	.	.	.	0	4	0
Refined Copper	.	.	.	.	0	8	0
					1	12	0

12-carat alloy for hall-marking. Cost £2 3s. 6d.
per oz.

No. 1.					oz. dwts. grs.		
Fine Gold	.	.	.	.	1	10	0
Fine Silver	.	.	.	.	0	2	12
Refined Copper	.	.	.	.	0	7	12
					1	0	0

12-carat with the addition of fine gold.

No. 2.				oz. dwts. grs.		
Fine Gold	.	.	.	0	10	2
Fine Silver	.	.	.	0	2	12
Refined Copper	.	.	.	0	7	10
				1	0	0

12-carat for hall-marking.

No. 3.				oz. dwts. grs.		
Fine Gold	.	.	.	1	0	0
Fine Silver	.	.	.	0	5	0
Refined Copper	.	.	.	0	15	0
				2	0	0

9-carat alloy for hall-marking. Cost £1 13s. per oz.

No. 1				oz. dwts. grs.		
Fine Gold	.	.	.	0	7	12
Fine Silver	.	.	.	0	2	12
Refined Copper	.	.	.	0	10	0
				1	0	0

9-carat with the addition of fine gold.

No. 2.				oz. dwts. grs.		
Fine Gold	.	.	.	0	7	14
Fine Silver	.	.	.	0	2	12
Refined Copper	.	.	.	0	9	22
				1	0	0

9-carat for hall-marking.

No. 3.

	oz.	dwt.	grs.
Fine Gold	1	0	0
Fine Silver	0	7	0
Refined Copper	1	6	8
	2	13	8

Silver.

Silver alloy for hall-marking. Cost 4s. 7d. per oz.

No. 1.

	oz.	dwt.	grs.
Fine Silver	0	18	12
Refined Copper	0	1	12
	1	0	0

Silver alloy with the addition of fine silver.

No. 2.

	oz.	dwt.	grs.
Fine Silver	0	18	14
Refined Copper	0	1	10
	1	0	0

Silver for hall-marking.

No. 3.

	oz.	dwt.	grs.
Fine Silver	1	0	0
Refined Copper	0	1	12
	1	1	12

Having now considered nearly all that is to be said upon the subject of English hall marks and

their method of application to the wares of the goldsmith and silversmith, we will bring this treatise to a conclusion by stating that we have given the matter in all its branches much careful attention for a number of years, and that our practical experience has been brought to bear upon the whole subject. We trust, therefore, that the various items of information to be found in these pages will prove useful not only to the trade and business men generally, but also to the general public, for whom a treatise of this description is much needed. We have added some further useful information in the form of an appendix.

APPENDIX.

A.

7 and 8 Victoria, c. 22, July 1844. An Act to amend the Laws now in force for preventing Frauds and Abuses in the marking of Gold and Silver Wares in England.

WHEREAS an Act was passed in the Thirteenth Year of the Reign of His late Majesty King *George* the Third, intituled *An Act for repealing so much of an Act of the Thirty-first Year of His late Majesty as inflicts Capital Punishment for Frauds and Abuses in the marking or stamping of Gold or Silver Plate, and for inflicting another Punishment for the said Offence*: And whereas by an Act passed in the Thirty-eighth Year of the Reign of His said late Majesty King *George* the Third, intituled *An Act for allowing Gold Wares to be manufactured at a Standard lower than is now allowed by Law*, it is enacted, "that from and after the said First Day of *October* One thousand seven hundred and ninety-eight if any person shall forge, cast, or counterfeit, or cause or procure to be cast, forged, or counterfeited, the Mark or Stamp used or directed to be used in pursuance of this Act for the marking

or stamping of Gold Plate by the Company of Goldsmiths in *London* or *Edinburgh*, or the *Birmingham* or *Sheffield* Company, or by the Wardens or Assayer or Assayers at *York*, *Exeter*, *Bristol*, *Chester*, *Norwich*, or *Newcastle-upon-Tyne*, or any or either of them, or shall cast, forge, or counterfeit, or shall cause or procure to be cast, forged, or counterfeited, any Mark, Stamp, or Impression in imitation of or to resemble any Mark, Stamp, or Impression made or to be made with any Mark or Stamp used or to be used as aforesaid by the said Company of Goldsmiths in *London* or *Edinburgh*, or by the said *Birmingham* or *Sheffield* Companies, or by the said Wardens or Assayer or Assayers, or any or either of them, or shall mark or stamp, or cause or procure to be marked or stamped, any wrought Plate of Gold, or any Wares of Silver, Brass, or other Metal gilt over and resembling Plate of Gold, with any Mark or Stamp which hath been or shall be forged or counterfeited at any Time, either before, on, or after the said First Day of *October* One thousand seven hundred and ninety-eight, in imitation of or to resemble any Mark or Stamp used or to be used as aforesaid by the said Company of Goldsmiths in *London* or *Edinburgh*, or by the said *Birmingham* or *Sheffield* Companies, or by the said Wardens or Assayer or Assayers, or any or either of them, or shall transpose or remove, cause or procure to be transposed or removed, from One Piece of wrought Plate to another, or to any Vessel of Silver, Brass, or other Metal as aforesaid, any Mark, Stamp, or Impression made or to be made by or with any Mark or Stamp used or to be used as aforesaid by the said Company of Goldsmiths in *London* or *Edinburgh*, or by the said *Birmingham* or *Sheffield* Companies, or by the said Wardens or Assayer or Assayers, or any or either of them, or shall sell, exchange, or expose to sale, or export out of this Kingdom, any wrought Plate of

Gold, or any Vessel of Silver, Brass, or other Metal as aforesaid, with any such forged or counterfeit Mark, Stamp, or Impression thereon, or any Mark, Stamp, or Impression which hath been or shall be transferred or removed from any other Piece of Plate, knowing such Mark, Stamp, or Impression to be forged, counterfeited, or transposed or removed as aforesaid, or shall wilfully or knowingly have or be possessed of any Mark or Stamp which hath been or shall be forged or counterfeit in imitation of and to resemble any Mark or Stamp used or to be used as aforesaid by the said Company of Goldsmiths in *London* or *Edinburgh*, or by the said *Birmingham* and *Sheffield* Companies, or by the said Wardens or Assayer or Assayers, or any or either of them, every such Person offending in any such or either of the Cases aforesaid, being thereof lawfully convicted, shall be adjudged guilty of Felony, and shall be transported to such Parts beyond the Seas as His Majesty, with the Advice of His Privy Council, shall direct, for the Space of Seven Years :” And whereas it is expedient to simplify the said Laws, and to alter the Punishments thereby imposed, and to make further Provision for preventing Frauds and Abuses in the marking of and dealing in Gold and Silver Wares : Be it therefore enacted by the Queen’s most Excellent Majesty, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the Authority of the same, That the said Act passed in the Thirteenth Year of the Reign of His said late Majesty King *George* the Third, and so much of the said Act passed in the Thirty-eighth Year of the Reign of His said late Majesty King *George* the Third as is herein-before recited, shall be and the same are hereby repealed, so far as the same relate to that Part of the United Kingdom called *England*, except as to Offences committed before the

Day on which this Act shall come into operation, which shall be dealt with and punished as if this Act had not been passed ; nevertheless no Act or Part of an Act repealed by the said Act passed in the Thirteenth Year of the Reign of His said late Majesty King *George* the Third shall be revived by the passing of this Act.

II. And be it enacted, That every Person who shall forge or counterfeit, or shall utter, knowing the same to be forged or counterfeited, any Die or other Instrument, or any Part of any Die or other Instrument, provided or used or to be provided or used by the Company of Goldsmiths in *London*, or by any of the several Companies of Goldsmiths in the Cities of *York*, *Exeter*, *Bristol*, *Chester*, or *Norwich*, or the Town of *Newcastle-upon-Tyne*, or by the Companies of Guardians of the Standard of Wrought Plate in the Towns of *Sheffield* or *Birmingham* respectively, for the marking or stamping of any Gold or Silver Wares ; and every Person who shall mark with any such forged or counterfeit Die or other Instrument, or with any Part of such forged or counterfeit Die or other Instrument as aforesaid, any Ware of Gold or Silver, or any Ware of base Metal, or shall utter any such Ware of Gold or Silver, or any such Ware of base Metal, so marked as aforesaid, knowing the same to be so marked as aforesaid ; and every Person who shall forge or counterfeit, or by any Means whatever produce an Imitation of, or shall utter, knowing the same to be forged or counterfeit or an Imitation, any Mark or Part of any Mark of any Die or other Instrument provided or used or to be provided or used as aforesaid, upon any Ware of Gold or Silver, or any Ware of base Metal ; and every Person who shall transpose or remove, or shall utter, knowing the same to be transposed or removed, any Mark of any Die or other Instrument provided or used or to be provided or used as aforesaid,

from any Ware of Gold or Silver to any other Ware of Gold or Silver, or to any Ware of base Metal; and every Person who shall without lawful Excuse (the Proof whereof shall lie on the Party accused) have in his Possession any such forged or counterfeit Die or other Instrument as aforesaid, or any Ware of Gold or Silver, or any Ware of base Metal, having thereupon the Mark of any such forged or counterfeit Die or other Instrument as aforesaid, or having thereupon any such forged or counterfeit Mark or Imitation of a Mark as aforesaid, or any Mark which shall have been so transposed or removed as aforesaid, knowing the same respectively to have been forged, counterfeited, imitated, marked, transposed, or removed; and every Person who shall cut or sever from any Ware of Gold or Silver any Mark or any Part of any Mark of any Die or other Instrument provided or used or to be provided or used as aforesaid, with Intent that such Mark or such Part of a Mark shall or may be placed upon or joined or affixed to any other Ware of Gold or Silver, or to any Ware of base Metal; and every Person who shall place upon or join or affix to any Ware of Gold or Silver, or any Ware of base Metal, any Mark of any Die or other Instrument provided or used or to be provided or used as aforesaid, which shall have been cut or severed from any Ware of Gold or Silver; and every Person who shall, with Intent to defraud Her Majesty, or any of the said several Companies of Goldsmiths and Guardians respectively, or any Person whatever, use any genuine Die or other Instrument provided or used or to be provided or used as aforesaid, and every Person counselling, aiding, or abetting any such Offender, shall be guilty of Felony, and shall, at the Discretion of the Court, either be transported beyond the Seas for any Term not exceeding Fourteen Years nor less than Seven Years, or to be im-

prisoned, with or without Hard Labour, for any Term not exceeding Three Years.

III. And be it enacted, That every Dealer in Gold or Silver Wares who shall sell or exchange, or expose or keep for sale, or shall export or import, or attempt to export or import, from or to *England*, or who shall have in his Possession without lawful Excuse (the Proof whereof shall lie upon him) any Ware of Gold or Silver, or any Ware of base Metal, having thereupon any Mark of any forged or counterfeit Die or other Instrument as aforesaid, or any forged or counterfeit Mark or Imitation of a Mark of any Die or other Instrument provided or used or to be provided or used by any of the several Companies of Goldsmiths and Guardians aforesaid for marking Gold or Silver Wares, or having thereupon any Mark which shall have been transposed or removed thereto from any other Ware of Gold or Silver, shall for every such Ware so sold or exchanged, or exposed or kept for sale, or exported or imported, or attempted to be exported or imported, or which shall so be in his Possession as aforesaid, forfeit and pay the Sum of Ten Pounds, which may be sued for and recovered by any of the several Companies of Goldsmiths and Guardians aforesaid in manner herein-after provided.

IV. Provided always, and be it enacted, That every such Dealer in Gold or Silver Wares who shall have sold or exchanged, or exposed or kept for sale, or exported or imported, or attempted to export or import, or had in his Possession, any such Ware of Gold or Silver, or any such Ware of base Metal, having thereupon any Mark of any such forged or counterfeited Die or other Instrument as aforesaid, or any such forged or counterfeit Mark or Imitation of a Mark as aforesaid, or any Mark which shall have been so transposed or removed thereto as aforesaid, and shall within Twenty-one

Days next after Notice thereof to him given by any of the several Companies of Goldsmiths or Guardians as aforesaid, or left at his usual Place of Abode, or at any House, Shop, or Place where he shall carry on or transact his said Trade or Business, discover and make known to the Company of Goldsmiths or Guardians in or nearest to the City, Town, or Place in which such Person shall reside, or shall carry on or transact his said Trade or Business, the Name and Place of Abode of the actual Manufacturer of any such Ware of Gold or Silver, or Ware of base Metal, or of the Person or Persons from whom such Dealer in Gold or Silver Wares bought, had, or received the same respectively, then such Dealer in Gold or Silver Wares shall be and he is hereby exempted and discharged from any Penalty or Forfeiture incurred by reason of his having so sold or exchanged or exposed or kept for sale, or exported or imported, or attempted to export or import, or having in his Possession, any such Ware of Gold or Silver, or Ware of base Metal, as aforesaid, anything herein-before contained to the contrary thereof notwithstanding: Provided always, that nothing herein contained shall extend to exempt any Person from the legal Consequences of uttering or of having in his Possession any such Ware as aforesaid, knowing the same to be marked with a forged or counterfeit Die or other Instrument, or knowing the Mark thereupon to be forged, counterfeited, imitated, transposed, or removed, if such Knowledge shall be duly proved in any Criminal Prosecution or Proceeding against such Person for any such Offence.

V. And be it enacted, That if any Ware of Gold or Silver which shall have been duly assayed and marked at any Assay Office of any of the several Companies of Goldsmiths or Guardians aforesaid shall at any Time after the passing of this Act be altered, either by any Addition made thereto or

otherwise, so that the Character or Denomination of such Ware, or the Use or Purpose for which the same was originally made or designed, shall be changed, or if any such Ware of Gold or Silver shall at any Time after the passing of this Act have any Addition made thereto (although its Character, Denomination, Use, or Purpose shall not be changed by reason of any such Addition), the Weight of which said Addition shall bear a greater Proportion to the original Weight of such Ware than Four Ounces Weight of such Addition to every Pound Troy Weight of such original Ware, every such Ware so altered or added to as aforesaid shall be again brought to the Assay Office of some one of the several Companies of Goldsmiths or Guardians aforesaid, and shall be assayed and marked as a new Ware, and as if no Part thereof had been before assayed, and notwithstanding any former Assay thereof, or the Marks of any such former Assay thereupon, and the Duty shall be paid upon the whole Weight of every such Ware, and of every Addition thereto (if any shall be made or intended to be made), without any Allowance for the Duty which may have been before paid upon any such Ware, or any Part thereof: Provided always, that if any Ware of Gold or Silver shall have any such Addition made thereto as last aforesaid, and the whole Weight of such Addition made thereto shall not bear a greater Proportion to the original Weight of such Ware than Four Ounces Weight of such Addition to every Pound Troy Weight of such original Ware, and so that the Character or Denomination, Use or Purpose, of such Ware, shall not be changed, it shall be lawful for the Company of Goldsmiths or Guardians at any such Assay Office to allow the Addition thereto only to be assayed and marked, and to receive and take the Duty on the Weight of such Addition thereto only provided that before any such Addition shall be made thereto

the said Ware shall be brought to such Office for the Inspection of such Company of Goldsmiths or Guardians aforesaid, and the Nature and Extent of the intended Additions thereto shall be fully explained to such Company, and such Company shall signify their Assent to the making of such Addition thereto ; and every Dealer in Gold or Silver Wares who shall by any Means whatever alter or change the Character or Denomination of any Ware of Gold or Silver which shall have been before assayed and marked by any of the several Companies of Goldsmiths or Guardians aforesaid, so that the Use or Purpose for which the same was originally made or designed shall be changed, and every Dealer in Gold or Silver Wares who shall make or affix, or caused to be made or affixed, to any Ware of Gold or Silver which shall have been before assayed and marked at any Assay Office of any of the several Companies of Goldsmiths or Guardians aforesaid, any Addition of Gold or Silver, or any Addition of base Metal, the Weight of which said Addition thereto shall bear a greater Proportion to the original Weight of such Ware than Four Ounces Weight of such Addition to every Pound Troy Weight of such original Ware, without bringing or sending such Ware of Gold or Silver, so altered, changed, or added to as aforesaid, with every Addition made or intended to be made thereto, to the Assay Office of some one of the several Companies of Goldsmiths or Guardians aforesaid, to be assayed and marked as a new Ware, and every Dealer in Gold or Silver Wares who shall make or affix to any Ware of Gold or Silver which shall have been before assayed and marked as aforesaid any Addition of Gold or Silver, or any Addition of base Metal, the whole Weight of which said Addition shall not bear a greater Proportion to the original Weight of such Ware than Four Ounces Weight of such Addition to every Pound Troy Weight of such original

Ware, without bringing or sending such last-mentioned Gold or Silver Ware so added to as last aforesaid, with every Addition intended to be made thereto, to the Assay Office of some one of the several Companies of Goldsmiths or Guardians aforesaid, for the Inspection of the said Company, and fully explaining the Nature and Extent of the intended Addition thereto to the said Company, and obtaining and procuring the Assent of the said Company to the making of such Addition before any such Addition shall be made thereto; and every Dealer in Gold or Silver Wares who shall sell or exchange, or expose or keep for sale, or export or attempt to export from *England*, or shall have in his Possession, any such Ware of Gold or Silver which shall have been so altered, changed, or added to as aforesaid, the same, or the Addition thereto, not having been so assayed and marked as aforesaid, shall for every such Ware forfeit and pay the Sum of Ten Pounds, which may be sued for and recovered by any of the several Companies of Goldsmiths or Guardians aforesaid respectively in the Manner herein-after provided; and every such Ware of Gold or Silver, if found at any House, Shop, or Place where any such Dealer in Gold or Silver Wares shall carry on or transact his Trade or Business, shall and may be lawfully seized by any of the several Companies of Goldsmiths or Guardians aforesaid, and by them be dealt with as herein-after is directed.

VI. Provided always, and be it enacted, That every such Dealer in Gold or Silver Wares who should have sold or exchanged, or exposed or kept for sale, or exported or attempted to export from *England*, or had in his Possession, any such Ware of Gold or Silver which shall have been so altered, changed, or added to as aforesaid, the same or the Addition thereto not having been so assayed and marked as aforesaid, and shall within Twenty-one Days next after

Notice thereof to him given by any of the several Companies of Goldsmiths or Guardians aforesaid, or left at his usual Place of Abode, or at any House, Shop, or Place where he shall carry on or transact his said Trade or Business, discover and make known to the company of Goldsmiths or Guardians in or nearest to the City, Town, or Place in which such Person shall reside, or shall carry on or transact his said Trade or Business, the Name and Place of Abode of the actual Manufacturer of any such Ware of Gold or Silver as last aforesaid, or of the Person or Persons from whom such Dealer in Gold or Silver Wares bought, had, or received the same respectively, then such Dealer in Gold or Silver Wares shall be and he is hereby exempted and discharged from any Penalty or Forfeiture incurred by reason of his having so sold or exchanged, or exposed or kept for sale, or exported or attempted to export, or having in his Possession, any such Ware of Gold or Silver as last aforesaid, anything herein-before contained to the contrary thereof notwithstanding.

VII. And for the further Prevention of Abuses in the making and assaying of Gold and Silver Wares, be it enacted, That if any Assayer or other Officer of or Person employed by the Company of Goldsmiths in *London*, or any of the several Companies of Goldsmiths of the cities of *York*, *Exeter*, *Bristol*, *Chester*, or *Norwich*, or of the Town of *Newcastle-upon-Tyne*, or either of the Companies of Guardians of the Standard of Wrought Plate in the Towns of *Sheffield* or *Birmingham* respectively, shall mark, or permit or suffer to be marked, any Ware of base Metal with any Die or other Instrument used or to be used by any such Company for marking Gold or Silver Wares to denote that the same is of the Standard allowed and required by Law, every such Company of Goldsmiths or Guardians aforesaid to which any

such Assayer or Officer shall belong or by whom such Person shall be employed shall for every such Offence forfeit and pay to Her Majesty the Sum of Twenty Pounds, which may be sued for and recovered in such and the like Manner as Penalties recoverable under any Act in force relating to Stamp Duties are to be sued for and recovered by law ; and every such Assayer or other Officer or Person employed as aforesaid, upon Complaint or Information made thereof by any Officer of Stamp Duties to any Justice of the Peace having Jurisdiction where any such Offence shall be committed, upon the Oath of One or more credible Person or Persons (which Oath such Justice is hereby empowered and required to administer), and upon being convicted thereof by or before such Justice, shall be by him forthwith dismissed and discharged from his said Office and Employment of or in the Company of Goldsmiths or Guardians aforesaid to or in which he shall have so belonged or been so employed as aforesaid, and shall be incapable for ever afterwards of holding any Office or Employment either in or under the same or any other of the Companies of Goldsmiths or Guardians aforesaid ; and every Ware of base Metal so marked as last aforesaid, when found in the Possession of any Dealer, or of any Officer of the Companies of Goldsmiths or Guardians aforesaid, shall and may be lawfully seized by any of the said Companies of Goldsmiths or Guardians aforesaid, other than the Company to which the offending Officer belongs, or by whom he is employed, and shall be dealt with as herein-after is provided.

VIII. And be it enacted, That every Dealer in Gold or Silver Wares who shall enter his private Mark under the Laws now in force with any of the Companies of Goldsmiths or Guardians aforesaid, shall at the time he so enters his private Mark at the Hall or Office of any such

Company give to the Officer there appointed to take the Entry of his said private Mark the Particulars of every House, Shop, and other Place in which he shall or may carry on or transact any Part of his said Trade or Business, and in which he shall or may deposit or keep any Gold or Silver Wares, as well as the Place of his Abode, in order that an Entry may be made at such Hall or Office of every such House, Shop, and other Place as aforesaid ; and every such Dealer in Gold or Silver Wares shall from Time to Time enter in like Manner at such Hall or Office of any of the Companies of Goldsmiths or Guardians aforesaid where his private Mark has already been or may hereafter be entered the Particulars of every House, Shop, and other Place in which he shall or may from Time to Time transact or carry on any Part of his said Trade or Business, or in which he shall or may from Time to Time keep or deposit any Gold or Silver Wares, in order that an Entry may from Time to Time be made at such Hall or Office of every such House, Shop, and other Place as aforesaid ; and every such Dealer in Gold or Silver Wares who shall fail, neglect, or refuse to give any such Particulars as aforesaid, and to cause such Entry of the same to be made as aforesaid, shall for every such Offence forfeit and pay the Sum of Five Pounds, which may be sued for and recovered in the Manner herein-after provided by the Company of Goldsmiths or Guardians aforesaid in respect whereof such Default shall have been made.

IX. And be it enacted, That every Dealer in Gold or Silver Wares who shall fraudulently erase, obliterate, or deface, or fraudulently cause to be erased, obliterated, or defaced, from any Ware of Gold or Silver, any Mark of any Die, Punch, or other Instrument used or to be used by any of the several Companies of Goldsmiths or Guardians

aforesaid for the marking or stamping of Gold or Silver Wares, or any private Mark of any Dealer in Gold or Silver Wares, shall for every such Offence forfeit and pay the Sum of Five Pounds, which may be sued for and recovered by any of the several Companies of Goldsmiths or Guardians aforesaid respectively in the Manner hereinafter provided.

X. And be it enacted, That the several pecuniary Forfeitures and Penalties imposed by this Act shall and may be sued for and recovered, with full Costs of Suit, in any of Her Majesty's Courts of Record at *Westminster*, by Action of Debt, Bill, Plaint, or Information in the Name of any Master, Warden, Assayer, Clerk, or other Officer of any of the said several Companies respectively entitled to sue for or recover the same, or where the Penalty shall be forfeited to Her Majesty in the Name of the Attorney General, or by Information in the Name of any such Officer, or where the Penalty shall be forfeited to Her Majesty in the Name of an Officer of Stamp Duties, before a Justice of the Peace, in like Manner as any Penalty may be recovered before any such Justice by any Officer of Stamp Duties ; and every such Penalty which shall be sued for and recovered in the Name of any Officer of the said several Companies respectively shall go and be paid wholly to the Company to which such Officer shall belong, to be applied by such Company in defraying the Expenses of their Assay Office, and of detecting and prosecuting Offenders against this Act.

XI. And be it enacted, That whenever any of the said several Companies of Goldsmiths or Guardians aforesaid shall have reasonable or probable Cause to suspect that any Dealer in Gold and Silver Wares hath concealed or deposited in any House, Shop, or Place, or hath possession

of any Wares of Gold or Silver which ought to be marked with any of the Marks provided or used or to be provided or used by any of the said Companies of Goldsmiths or Guardians respectively, for marking or stamping Gold or Silver Wares, and not so marked, or hath concealed or deposited as aforesaid, or hath possession of any such forged or counterfeited Die or other Instrument, or any Ware of Gold or Silver, or Ware of base Metal, having thereupon any Mark of any such forged or counterfeited Die or other Instrument as aforesaid, or having thereupon any forged or counterfeited Mark of any Die or other Instrument provided or used or to be provided or used as aforesaid, or any Mark which shall have been so transposed or removed thereto as aforesaid, it shall be lawful for any Justice of the Peace having Jurisdiction where any or either of such Offences shall be suspected to be committed, and such Justice is hereby required, upon Information or Complaint made of any such reasonable or probable Cause of Suspicion, by or on behalf of any of the several Companies of Goldsmiths or Guardians aforesaid, and upon the Oath of One or more credible Person or Persons (which Oath such Justice is hereby empowered and required to administer), to grant a Warrant under his Hand directed to any One or more of the Officers of any of the several Companies of Goldsmiths or Guardians aforesaid, together with any Constable or other Peace Officer named in such Warrant, authorizing and empowering such Officer of the said Companies respectively, and such Constable or other Peace Officer as aforesaid, with necessary and proper Assistance, to enter in the Day-time into any such House, Shop, or Place as aforesaid, or any other House, Shop, or Place of any such suspected Person, and to search the same, and to seize and take away every such forged or counterfeited Die or other Instrument

and every such Ware as aforesaid, which shall there be found ; and all Constables and other Peace Officers shall and they are hereby required to be aiding and assisting in the Execution of every such Warrant as aforesaid ; and every such forged and counterfeited Die or other Instrument, and every such Ware as aforesaid, so there found, seized, and taken, shall and may be dealt with as herein-after is provided : Provided always, and it is hereby declared, that nothing in this Act contained shall authorize the Search for or Seizure of any Wares which by the Laws now in force are not required to be marked or stamped by any of the Companies of Goldsmiths or Guardians aforesaid, or any of the Wares following ; namely, Watch Rings, Watch Keys, Watch Hooks, Earrings, Necklaces, Eyeglasses, Spectacles of Gold, Shirt Pins or Studs, Bracelets, Head Ornaments, Waist Buckles.

XII. And be it enacted, That every Die, Punch, or other Instrument which shall or may be lawfully seized or taken under this Act by the said Company of Goldsmiths in *London*, or by any of the several Companies of Goldsmiths or Guardians aforesaid, or by any Officer of any of the said Companies respectively, shall be broken, detained, and destroyed by such Company ; and every such Ware so seized or taken as aforesaid, if it shall be shown to the Satisfaction of the Court or Justice or Justices before whom Proceedings shall be had in respect of such Ware that the same has been lawfully seized and taken under the Provisions of this Act, shall be broken and defaced ; and in case it shall be shown to the Satisfaction of such Court or Justice or Justices that the Dealer from whom the same shall have been so seized or taken had such Ware in his Possession, knowing the same to be marked with a forged or counterfeit Die or other Instrument, or knowing the Mark thereupon to be forged, coun-

terfeit, imitated, transferred, or removed, or knowing such Ware to have been altered, changed, or added to as aforesaid (the same or the Addition thereto not having been assayed or marked as required by this Act), or knowing such Ware to be of base Metal, then and in every such Case, and likewise in every Case in which such Ware has been seized or taken from any Officer of any Company of Goldsmiths or Guardians aforesaid as being of base Metal, and fraudulently marked, every such Ware so broken and defaced shall be melted and the Metal thereof shall be sold and disposed of, and the Produce thereof shall be entered in the Book of Account of Receipts and Payments relating to the Assay Office belonging to the said Company by whom or by whose Officer such Ware shall have been so seized or taken, and shall be applied towards defraying the general Expenses of the Assay Office of such Company, and in the Prosecution of Offenders under this Act ; and, save and except as aforesaid, every such Ware so seized and taken, or broken and defaced, shall be given back to the Dealer from whom it shall have been so seized and taken.

XIII. And be it enacted, That all Actions and Prosecutions which shall be brought or commenced against any Person for anything done in pursuance or under the Authority of this Act shall be commenced and prosecuted within Three Calendar Months next after the Fact committed, and not afterwards, and shall be brought and tried in the County or Place where the Cause of Action shall arise, and not elsewhere ; and Notice in Writing of such Action, and of the Cause thereof shall be given to the Defendant One Calendar Month at least before the Commencement of the Action ; and the Defendant in such Action may plead the General Issue, and give this Act and any other Matter or Thing in Evidence at any Trial to be had thereupon ; and if the Cause

of Action shall appear to arise from any Matter or Thing done in pursuance and by the Authority of this Act, or if any such Action shall be brought after the Expiration of such Three Calendar Months, or shall be brought in any other County or Place than as aforesaid, or if Notice of such Action shall not have been given in manner aforesaid, or if Tender or sufficient Amends shall have been made before such Action commenced, or if a sufficient Sum of Money shall have been paid into Court after such Action commenced, by or on behalf of the Defendant, the Jury shall find a Verdict for the Defendant; and if a Verdict shall pass for the Defendant, or if the Plaintiff shall become Nonsuit, or shall discontinue any such Action, or if, on Demurrer or otherwise, Judgment shall be given against the Plaintiff, the Defendant shall recover his full Costs of Suit as between Attorney and Client, and shall have the like Remedy for the same as any Defendant may have for Cost of Suit in other Cases at Law; and, although a Verdict shall be given for the Plaintiff in any such Action, such Plaintiff shall not have Costs against the Defendant, unless the Judge before whom the Trial shall be had shall at the Time of such Trial certify in Writing his Approbation of the Action, and of the Verdict obtained thereupon.

XIV. And for the better Interpretation of this Act, and to avoid the frequent Use of divers Terms and Expressions, be it enacted, That the following Terms and Expressions shall have the several Interpretations herein-after respectively set forth; (that is to say,) the Term "base Metal" shall mean any Metal whatsoever other than Gold or Silver of the respective Standards required by Law; and the Term "Dealer in Gold or Silver Wares" shall mean and include every Goldsmith and Silversmith, and every Worker, Maker, and Manufacturer of and Trader and Dealer in Gold or

Silver Wares ; and the Term " Die " shall mean and include any Die, Plate, Tool, or Instrument whatever, by means whereof any Mark can or shall be made upon any Metal whatsoever ; and the Term " Her Majesty " shall mean and include Her Majesty, Her Heirs and Successors ; and the Term " Mark " shall mean and include any Mark, Stamp, or Impression of and made with any Die or other Instrument, or produced by any other Means whatsoever upon any Metal whatsoever ; and the Term " Ware " shall mean and include any Plate, Vessel, Article, or Manufacture of any Metal whatsoever ; and whenever in this Act, with reference to any Person or Matter or Thing, or to any Persons or Matters or Things, the Singular or Plural Number or the Masculine Gender only is expressed, such Expression shall be understood to include several Persons or Matters or Things as well as one Person or Matter or Thing, and one Person Matter or Thing as well as several Persons or Matters or Things, Females as well as Males, Bodies Politic or Corporate as well as Individuals, unless it be otherwise specially provided, or the Subject or Context be repugnant to such Construction.

XV. And whereas all Gold Wares of the Standard or Fineness of Twenty-two Carats of fine Gold in every Pound Troy assayed by any of the said Companies of Goldsmiths and Guardians are by certain Statutes now in force required to be marked with the same Mark as that with which all Silver Wares of the Standard or Fineness of Eleven Ounces and Two Pennyweights, assayed as aforesaid, are required to be marked, (that is to say,) with the Figure of the Lion passant, in order to denote the Standards thereof respectively, whereby great Facilities to Frauds are afforded, and extensive Frauds have been committed by Dealers in Gold and Silver Wares ; and it is expedient that all Gold Wares of the

Standard or Fineness aforesaid, and so assayed as aforesaid, should be marked by a different Mark, to denote the Standard thereof, from the Mark so used for the said Silver Wares as aforesaid: Be it therefore enacted, That from and after the First Day of *October* One thousand eight hundred and forty-four there shall be struck or marked by the said Company of Goldsmiths in *London*, and by the several Companies of Goldsmiths in the Cities of *York, Exeter, Bristol, Chester, and Norwich*, and the Town of *Newcastle-upon-Tyne*, and the Company of Guardians of the Standard of wrought Plate in the Town of *Birmingham*, upon all Gold Wares of the Standard or Fineness of Twenty-two Carats of fine Gold in every Pound Troy, brought to them respectively to be assayed, the Mark of a Crown and the Figures 22, instead of the Mark of the Lion passant.

XVI. And be it enacted, That the Rules, Directions, Powers, Privileges, Pains, Penalties, Forfeitures, Causes, Matters, and Things enacted or provided in and by any of the Laws and Statutes of this Realm now in force in relation to the Mark of the Lion passant on Gold Wares of the Standard or Fineness of Twenty-two Carats in the Pound Troy, and assayed as aforesaid, and also in relation to the Die used for making the said Mark of the Lion passant, shall extend to, and be continued, applied, practised, and put in execution in all Cases relating to the said Mark of a Crown and the Figures 22 hereby directed to be used for the Gold Wares aforesaid, and also relating to the said Die to be used for making the said Mark, as fully and effectually to all Intents and Purposes, as if the same Rules, Directions, Powers, Privileges, Pains, Penalties, Forfeitures, Causes, Matters and Things were again particularly repeated and enacted in and by the present Act, anything in the Statutes now in force or any of them contained to the contrary notwithstanding.

XVII. And be it enacted, That this Act shall not extend to *Scotland* or *Ireland*.

XVIII. And be it enacted, That this Act shall come into operation on the First Day of *October* One thousand eight hundred and forty-four.

XIX. And be it enacted, That this Act may be amended or repealed by any Act to be passed during this present Session of Parliament.

B.

17 and 18 Victoria, c. 96, August, 1854. An Act for allowing Gold Wares to be manufactured at a lower Standard than that now allowed by Law, and to amend the Law relating to the Assaying of Gold and Silver Wares.

WHEREAS it is expedient that Gold of Standards inferior to those now allowed by Law should be permitted to be used in Manufactures of Gold, and that Provision should be made for authorizing such lower Standards: Be it therefore enacted by the Queen's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the Authority of the same, as follows:

I. It shall be lawful for Her Majesty, by any Order or Orders to be from Time to Time made by and with the Advice of Her Privy Council, to order that any Gold Vessel, Plate, or Manufacture of Gold may be wrought of any Standard not being less than One Third Part in the whole

of Fine Gold, to be declared in any such Order, and also to approve thereby of the Instrument with which Gold Vessels, Plate, and Manufactures of Gold shall be marked or stamped, setting forth in Figures the actual fineness thereof, according to the Standard so declared; and every such Gold Vessel, Plate, and Manufacture of Gold may be wrought accordingly; and it shall be lawful for Her Majesty, by and with the Advice aforesaid, to revoke or alter from Time to Time any such Order as aforesaid.

II. Workers or Dealers in Gold or Silver may register their Names, Marks, and Places of Abode at any Assay Office or Offices established by Law which they may select, and may thereupon have the Wares which are manufactured by them assayed and marked at such Office or Offices, without being liable to any Forfeiture or Penalty imposed by any Act now in force for not registering their Names, Marks, or Places of Abode, or for making, selling, or exporting such Wares without being marked at a particular Assay Office, and the Wares which shall be assayed as aforesaid may be sold or exposed by any Person without being liable to any Forfeiture or Penalty, notwithstanding any Provision to the contrary in any Act now in force.

III. If any of the Gold Wares which by any Statute now in force are not liable to be assayed and marked shall nevertheless be assayed and marked as of One of the Standards authorized by Law, such Wares shall not by reason thereof be chargeable with the Duty now levied upon Gold Plate.

IV. Nothing in this Act contained shall be deemed or taken to repeal the Statutes now in force relating to Standards of Gold Wares, or to the Marks for denoting the same, or any of such Statutes, but the same, and all the Provisions, Prohibitions, Penalties, and Forfeitures enacted

thereby respectively, shall continue to be in as full Force and Effect as if this Act had not passed, and shall be construed with and as forming Part of this Act, save only that in the Interpretation thereof all Standards authorized by Her Majesty in pursuance of this Act shall be deemed and taken to be lawful standards; and all Gold Vessels, Plate, and Manufactures wrought in conformity with this Act shall be deemed and taken to be lawfully wrought within the Meaning of the said Statutes; and all Gold Vessels, Plate, and Manufactures duly assayed and marked in conformity with this Act, and being of the Standard duly authorized in pursuance of the same, shall be deemed and taken to be lawfully assayed and marked within the Meaning of the same Statutes respectively.

V. If any Assayer or other Officer or Person employed by any Company or Corporation authorized to assay and mark Gold Vessels, Plate, or Manufactures of Gold shall mark or permit or suffer to be marked any Gold Vessel, Plate, or Manufacture of Gold of a lower Standard with any Die or other Instrument used by any such Company or Corporation for marking Gold Vessels; Plate, or Manufactures of Gold of a higher Standard, every such Company or Corporation to which such Assayer or Officer shall belong or by which such Person shall be employed shall for every such Offence forfeit and pay to Her Majesty the Sum of Twenty Pounds, which may be sued for and recovered in such and the like Manner as Penalties recoverable under any Act in force relating to Stamp Duties are to be sued for and recovered by Law; and every such Assayer or other Officer or Person employed as aforesaid, upon Complaint or Information made thereof by any Officer of Stamp Duties to any Justice of the Peace having Jurisdiction where any such Offence shall be committed, upon the Oath of One or

more credible Person or Persons (which Oath such Justice is hereby empowered and required to administer), and upon being convicted of such Offence by or before such Justice, shall be by him forthwith dismissed and discharged from his said Office and Employment of or in the Company or Corporation to or in which he shall have so belonged or been so employed as aforesaid, and shall be incapable for ever afterwards of holding any Office or Employment in or under the same or any other such Company or Corporation; and every Gold Vessel, Plate, and Manufacture of Gold of a lower Standard so marked as last aforesaid shall and may be lawfully seized by any such Company or Corporation other than the Company or Corporation to which the offending Officer or Person belongs or by whom he is employed, and shall be dealt with in like Manner as is provided with respect to Wares seized by virtue of the Provisions of the Act of the Seventh and Eighth Years of the Reign of Her present Majesty, Chapter Twenty-two.

C.

30 and 31 Victoria, c. 90, August, 1867. An Act to alter certain Duties, and to amend the Laws relating to the Inland Revenue.

BE it enacted by the Queen's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the Authority of the same, as follows:

As to Excise.

1. In lieu of the Duties now payable in *Great Britain* on Licences to Persons trading in, vending, or selling Gold or

Silver Plate, and in *Ireland* on Licences to Persons to sell or make Gold or Silver Plate, there shall from and after the Fifth Day of *July* One thousand eight hundred and sixty-seven be charged and paid the following Excise Duties on Licences to deal in Plate to be taken out yearly in the United Kingdom by the Persons herein-after mentioned ; (that is to say,)

By every Person who shall trade in or sell any Article composed wholly or in part of Gold or Silver, in respect of every House, Shop, or other Place in which his Trade or Business shall be carried on—

Where the Gold shall be above Two Pennyweights and under Two Ounces in Weight, or the Silver above Five Pennyweights and under Thirty Ounces in Weight, the Sum of Two Pounds Six Shillings ;

Where the Gold shall be of the Weight of Two Ounces or upwards, or the Silver of the Weight of Thirty Ounces or upwards, the Sum of Five Pounds Fifteen Shillings :

By every Person duly licensed as a Hawker, Pedlar, or Petty Chapman who shall sell in the ordinary Course of his trading as a Hawker, Pedlar, or Petty Chapman any Article composed wholly or in part of Gold or Silver, the same Duties as above mentioned according to the Weight of the Gold or Silver :

By every Pawnbroker who shall trade in or sell any Article composed wholly or in part of Gold or Silver, or who shall take in Pawn, or deliver out of Pawn, any such Article in respect of every House, Shop, or other Place in which his Trade or Business shall be carried on, the Sum of Five Pounds Fifteen Shillings :

By every Refiner of Gold or Silver in respect of every

House, Shop, or other Place as aforesaid, the Sum of Five Pounds Fifteen Shillings.

2. The Duties granted by this Act on Licences to deal in Plate and the said Licences shall be Excise Duties and Licences, and shall be under the Management of the Commissioners of Inland Revenue, and all the Powers, Provisions, Clauses, Regulations, and Directions contained in or imposed by any Act relating to Excise Duties or Licences, or to Penalties under Excise Acts, and now or hereafter in force, shall respectively be of full Force and Effect with respect to the Duties by this Act granted, and the Licences relating thereto, and to the Penalties hereby imposed, so far as the same are applicable, and shall be observed, applied, and enforced for and in the collecting, securing, and recovering of the said last-mentioned Duties and Penalties hereby granted and imposed respectively, and the granting and Management of the said Licences, and otherwise in relation to the said Duties, Penalties, and Licences, so far as the same shall be consistent with and not superseded by the express Provisions of this Act, as fully and effectually as if the same had been herein repeated and specially enacted with reference to the said last-mentioned Duties, Penalties, and Licences respectively.

3. Every Person who shall do any Act, or carry on any Trade or Business for which a Licence to deal in Plate is required by this Act, without having in force a proper Licence authorizing him so to do, shall for every Offence forfeit the Sum of Fifty Pounds; and in any Proceeding for the Recovery of such Penalty it shall be sufficient to allege that the Defendant did deal in Plate without a proper Licence in that Behalf, and it shall not be necessary further or otherwise to describe the Offence.

4. No Licence to deal in Plate shall be necessary to

enable any Person to trade in, or sell, or to take in Pawn, or deliver out of Pawn, Gold or Silver Lace, or Gold or Silver Wire, Thread, or Fringe.

5. All Articles sold or offered for Sale, or taken in Pawn or delivered out of Pawn, and alleged to be composed wholly or in part of Gold or Silver, shall, for the Purposes of this Act, be deemed and taken to be composed of Gold and Silver respectively as alleged; and if upon the Hearing of any Information for any Offence against this Act any Question shall arise touching the Quantity of Gold or Silver contained in any Article the Proof of such Quantity shall lie upon the Defendant.

6. Every Licence to deal in Plate taken out under this Act shall be dated the Day on which the same shall be granted, and shall expire on the Fifth Day of *July* next after the granting of the same: Provided that every Person who at the Time of the passing of this Act shall be the Holder of a Licence to sell or make Gold or Silver Plate in *Ireland*, expiring on the Fifth Day of *January* in the Year One thousand eight hundred and sixty-eight, shall, if he shall take out a Licence to deal in Plate under this Act at any Time before the First Day of *February* in the same Year, be entitled to have the same upon Payment of One Half the Duty chargeable upon such Licence under this Act.

7. The several Sections and Parts of Sections of the Acts specified in the Schedule A.* to this Act annexed shall be repealed, save as to any Duties due or in arrear, and as to any Penalties incurred on or before the passing of this Act.

* See next page.

SCHEDULE A., containing the Enactments repealed by Section 7 of this Act.

Act.	Subject.	Extent of Repeal.
31 Geo. 2. c. 32.	For granting a Duty on Licences to be taken out by all Persons dealing in Gold or Silver Plate, &c. &c.	Sections 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13.
32 Geo. 2. c. 24.	To amend the Law relating to Licences to deal in Gold and Silver Plate.	Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.
59 Geo. 3. c. 32.	To continue an Act granting additional Duties of Excise.	Section 3.
6 Geo. 4. c. 118.	To transfer Collection of Plate Licences from Commissioners of Excise to Commissioners of Stamps.	So much of Section 1 as relates to Licences to Persons to sell or make Gold or Silver Plate in Ireland. Sections 2, 3.
9 Geo. 4. c. 49.	To amend the Laws relating to Licences to Dealers in Gold and Silver Plate, &c. &c.	So much of Section 12 as relates to Licences to deal in Plate.
5 & 6 Vict. c. 82.	To assimilate the Stamp Duties in Great Britain and Ireland, &c. &c.	So much of Section 2 as relates to Licences to Persons to sell or make Gold or Silver Plate in Ireland.

D.

33 and 34 Victoria, c. 32, part ii., s. 4, August, 1870.

An Act to grant certain Duties, Customs and Inland Revenue, and to repeal and alter other Duties of Customs and Inland Revenue.

SECTION 4.

ON and after the sixth day of July, one thousand eight hundred and seventy, it shall not be necessary for any person to take out a licence as a dealer in plate, in order to enable him to sell watch cases which shall have been made by him.

[*Birmingham Assay Office Form.*]

BIRMINGHAM ASSAY OFFICE.

18

The Work of

DOZ.

State if Gold
or Silver.

oz. dwt. gr.

Weight

At the Office Scales . . .

Allowance of one-sixth .

£	| s.	| d.
---	----	----

at 17s. . .

at 1s. 6d. .

Net duty received on . . .



F.

209

[Form sent with Gold Goods.]

No. _____ To the Wardens attending this Day
at the Birmingham Assay Office.

The **GOLD** Work of _____
_____ 18 _____

	doz.	Description of Work.	oz.	dwt.	grs.
22 Carat.					
18 Carat.					
15 Carat.					
12 Carat.					
9 Carat.					
Total Quantity ...		TOTAL WEIGHT ...			
			£	s.	d.
		DUTY			
		MARKING			



No. Received from _____ at _____ h. m.

Sundries { oz., dwts., grs.

DUTY ...

MARKING ...

£	s.	d.

Please deliver the above to the Bearer, _____

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